who has reared him and there his descendants live. 644
Some lineages of the royal clan, the *ororo*, have 591
been formally deprived of their noble status and 565
can now intermarry with their parent clan. They 614
are said to be descendants of Ocolo, the fifth king, who were degraded by his successor, but Father Hofmayr's and Father Crazzolara's accounts[1] would suggest that some of them may be descended from nobles degraded by other kings, and further research will probably confirm this. They are few in number but they hold the important chieftainship of Tonga settlement and they play a leading part in the royal funerary and investiture rites. A king always has some of their daughters among his wives and it is said to be their duty to smother him in certain circumstances.

The emergence of what may be called aristo- 565
cratic status has been accompanied by the forma- 644
tion of numerous groups of persons of the category 613
of *bang reth*, royal clients. They are descendants of retainers of past kings—captured enemies, certain homicides, persons who have become possessed by the spirit of Nyikang, and poor men who have

[1] Wilhelm Hofmayr, *Die Schilluk* (1925), pp. 66, 83, and 261–2; P. J. P. Crazzolara, 'Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Religion und Zauberei bei den Schilluk', *Anthropos* (1932), p. 185.

565 attached themselves to the court—and have been
644 given the fictional collectivity of exogamous line-
[613] ages. They are said to be rather more numerous than the royal clan. During a king's lifetime his special band of retainers used, until the practice was discouraged by the Government, to live near the capital in a hamlet of their own, but when their master was buried in his natal settlement some of them moved there with his elderly widows, and their descendants remained there to tend his shrine. Also, when a prince was 'planted out', as the Shilluk say, in a settlement, his father sent some of his retainers to live there and these became *bang*
565 *nyireth*, a prince's clients. They served the prince
644 during his lifetime, and after his death their de-
613 scendants continued to live near the prince's
621 descendants as a fictitious lineage. Consequently, where there is a branch of the royal clan in a settlement there is usually a lineage of clients in the same
[101] settlement. The clients are merged in the general category of commoners, *colo*, of which word 'Shilluk' is an Arabic corruption, though it is said of them that they have a slightly lower social status than members of other commoner clans because they have no traditional rights in the settlements in which they live.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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two, or even three or four, branches of the royal house from which the kings were elected in turn. From the genealogy it may be seen that sons of kings have succeeded their fathers but that this is by no means the rule; the succession may pass to brothers, ortho-cousins, or paternal nephew, and in one case a paternal uncle succeeded his brother's son. What is clear is that all recent kings have been descendants of the brothers Akwot (19) and Nyadok (22). Each of these kings had two sons who eventually came to the throne, and all their direct descendants are eligible from the Shilluk point of view. But we could not discover any rule dictating from which of these houses the royal candidates for the throne should be chosen. It is certain that each house would press its claim. There seem very good reasons why the sons of the twenty-seventh and the twenty-eighth kings have not come to the throne, and apart from Government influence it may be that their lines will have less claim in the future, since Kur, the twenty-seventh king, did not meet his death as a Shilluk king should but was deposed by the Government and died in confinement in the northern Sudan. Fadiet, the twenty-eighth king, succeeded with the approval of the Government, but many of the Shilluk did not recognize him as legitimate during the lifetime of Kur. It must have been quite impossible to carry out the ritual enthronement in the correct spirit while a former king was still living; certainly a son of Kur could not have come to the throne during the lifetime of his father, while as to Fadiet, he was neither popular nor efficient.

Tribute is paid to the king, but his sovereignty is largely exercised through the high-chiefs (*jang duong*) of the great provinces into which the realm is divided. The selection of these officers—who tend to be hereditary—is in the hands of the king, but the approval of the community is sought, and it is probably these chiefs who form the "great council" mentioned by Hofmayr, which is summoned by the king in exceptional cases.[1] Hofmayr also states that the king's messengers are usually relatives of the king. The high-chiefs of the provinces accompany the king on his journeys.

The greatest respect and honour is shown to the king. In the old days he was not allowed to go to battle, and even now he keeps up considerable state and has much authority. Even a royal son addresses the king with face somewhat averted, the left hand hiding the mouth and lower part of the face; this he does sitting at ease,

[1] Op. cit., 151–2.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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643 but others should crouch with head turned over the right shoulder,
644 and perhaps with one hand shading the face. Aker, widow of two kings and one of our best informants, used to delight to mimic the respectful manner in which she would serve the king, presenting food on her knees with head averted, and then move away kneeling to crouch with averted face while the king was eating, her garment being held to her side by her elbow; after the king had eaten she would pour water on his hands, still with averted face.

643 Disputes may be settled by the local or district chiefs, but an appeal to the king is always possible. District and village chiefs are assisted [692] by the local elders in the administration of justice. The method [651] of raising the tribute to the king has not been investigated, but examples in the following pages (confirmed by Westermann's account) will show that certain clans owed special duties to the king; indeed, anyone killing a leopard must send its skin to the royal household, while the *gyek* antelope is specially hunted to obtain skins for the king. As the fountain of justice, the king kept for himself by far the greater part 643 of the fines for homicide and other grave offences. The fine for 681 man-killing was usually ten head of cattle, but sometimes more was levied; a girl might be taken in lieu of the cattle, when the king would allow the girl to marry but would keep the bride-wealth; or a girl and boy might be kept as hostages by the king until the cattle were paid. The king might give one or two head of cattle to the family of the deceased as compensation; this, however, did [628] not always settle the matter, and a blood feud might start and be continued until the balance of dead was even, often not only families but whole villages becoming involved.

635 Hofmayr, quoting Father Banholzer, describes the investiture of a high chief of one of the ten main provinces.[1] It is obvious that 577 his functions are regarded as more than merely administrative, and that his correct ethical behaviour is almost the main concern of the old man—one of his future sub-chiefs—who, clasping his feet, recites the duties of his new office. He should let no stranger go hungry, he should use no abusive language, but be just and leave the houses and women of his underlings alone. The new high-chief takes oath to observe these duties, in token of which he licks the blade of a spear, presses it to his forehead, and then waves it over the ox he sacrifices. He remains in seclusion in his hut for four days;

[1] Op. cit., 131. These great district chiefs are known as *Jang Duong*. This is not a technical but rather a courtesy title, lit. "big chief". All chiefs are *ago*.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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only after this is he "the chosen of God" (*aronyi Juok*) and fit incumbent of his new office. The first ceremonial duty of the high-chief is to visit the king, who presents him with an ox, more costly presents being made to the high-chiefs of Mwom and Tonga. Every high-chief has his assistant (*tyel kwome*), who exercises authority as occasion requires. The village chiefs are chosen by their communities, and we believe all these offices to be in the main hereditary, though further investigation is here necessary, as it is with regard to the ministerial council, mentioned by Hofmayr, whose members are selected by the king.

Fashoda—not to be confused with Kodok, the Fashoda of international fame—is the royal capital, *fa reth* ("the place of the king"), from which the king has ruled for many decades. Yet it was not always so: Father Banholzer told us that formerly each Shilluk king reigned from and was buried in his native village. Fenikang is the traditional capital of Nyakang and probably of his immediate successors. Perhaps, too, some of the early kings ruled the country from Tatuga (Doleib Hill). Tugo is said to have been the first king to live at Fashoda; whether this is correct or not, Fashoda certainly was not the *fa reth* of all the kings who succeeded him, though Nyadwai and Yur Adodit ruled the country from villages in its neighbourhood. Nyadwai lived and died at Kodok, where in 1909 we were shown the remains of the tree which according to tradition sprang from his grave; actually the association seems to have been that it stood near his dwelling and that he would often sit under it. Malakal and Walajok are also said to have been capitals in their time.

The king and his many wives live at Fashoda (Pl. V, Fig. 1). The king's dwelling when we saw it in 1910 consisted of four huts, no better built than those of his people and lacking the ostrich-egg and spear of the royal shrines. They stood well above the rest of the settlement on an artificial mound, called Aturwic (shown on Pl. VI), which may have been some ten feet high, and was said to have been built by the tenth king, Tugo.

The king observes the same marriage prohibitions as his people, even remote relatives on both sides of the family being forbidden; thus the king and all male descendants of the king must marry commoners, while daughters of the king should not marry at all, though foreign influence is, we believe, slowly modifying the old practice. Mr. Heasty writes that unless the king takes a

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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582 girl in compensation for some great favour shown to her father
583 he pays bride-wealth, but he fixes the amount himself, usually
643 double that paid by a commoner. There will, however, be no negotiation, nor would a commoner ever attempt to recover cattle
643 of the bride-wealth that had died. The king owes no respect to mother-in-law or other relatives by marriage, who all treat him with the same reverence as do other unconnected commoners. No Shilluk
[593 woman is particularly reverential to her husband, nor would she take
582] a beating with resigned submission, but a royal wife should kneel with bowed head to receive a whipping should the king wish to punish
643 her. Mr. Heasty informs us that one wife is always appointed head
644 wife and is treated with great respect by all, including the king himself. She acts as intermediary between the other women and the king; she is an elderly woman, usually a widow of a previous king, and holds her appointment until displaced by the king. The king would seldom
[582 take a wife from the *ororo* unless she were an unusually attractive
565] woman, because no son of an *ororo* can ever become king.

The king's children are never born in Fashoda. In the fourth
● 644 or fifth month of her pregnancy the expectant mother is sent
591 with attendants and cattle to some distant village, and here she remains under the protection of the chief until the child is weaned, when she may return to Fashoda. During each subsequent pregnancy she goes to a different village. The child is brought up in its native village, and the cattle that the mother brings with her are its portion. In this village he (or she) should be buried. No special conditions are required for the selection of a locality beyond the strength and discretion of the chief under whose charge the child will grow up and the presence of good grazing ground for the royal herd.[1] Every
644 royal son is recognized as a potential king and is treated with the
565 utmost indulgence and respect; the royal daughters also have their privileges, but are not so highly regarded. The royal daughters
[582] are not allowed to marry, it being alleged that it would not be fitting for a woman of royal birth to marry a commoner, while she could not marry a *nyireth*, or the descendants of one, as this would be incestuous.
[836] Royal daughters may have lovers, but must not bear children. Mr. Heasty informs us that they may select whom they will, *kwareth*

[1] Mr. Heasty considers that the reason for sending the royal wives away is that the king is ambitious for his sons and hopes that they will start villages for themselves; if they were born in Fashoda they would have no villages of their own. Foreign wives of the king are sent to Shilluk villages in the same way as are Shilluk women.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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PLATE VI

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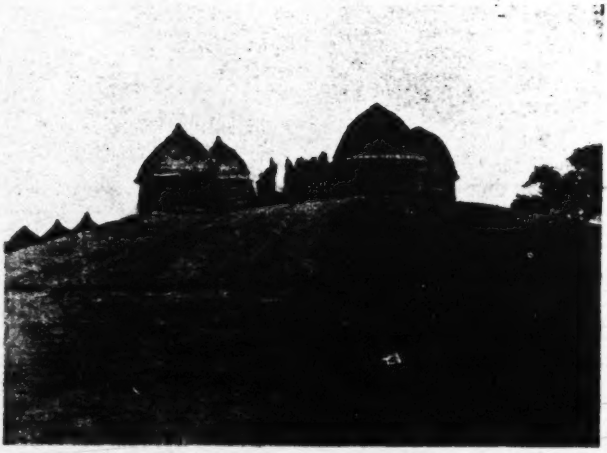

Fashoda, Atarwic

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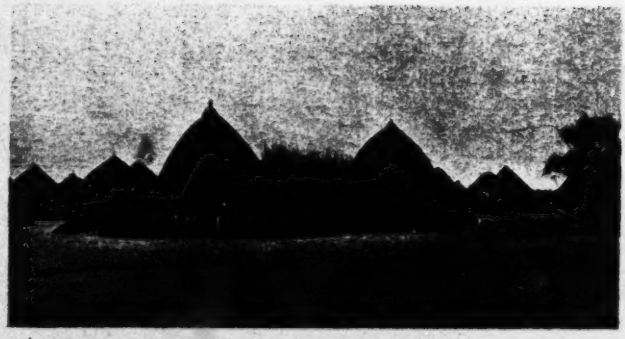

Akurwa, shrine of Nyakang in 1910

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2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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or commoners, and even close relatives, including half-brothers by the same father, though connection with a full brother or a uterine half-brother would not be permitted. Royal daughters are treated with great respect, may exercise considerable influence in district affairs, and when elderly may help and advise the local chief, but they never become guardians of shrines as do the king's wives and widows.

We did not hear of the rivalry between princes leading to actual warfare for the throne, though considering how commonly the Shilluk quarrel among themselves this seemed probable, and some of the old traditional quarrels between North and South may have originated in such rivalry. It is related that Nyakwac killed the surviving children of his great uncle Nyadwai (the twelfth king), though three of them had already reigned before him, but we do not think this was a common practice.

The children of the king are called *nyireth*; his grandchildren are *nyinyireth*, and his great grandchildren are *kwanyireth*; their children again may be called *kwanyireth*. The four generations are regarded as of royal blood in descending degrees, and even *kwanyireth* follow the royal practice of retaining their lower central incisors instead of having them knocked out as commoners do, but the children of *kwanyireth* are treated as commoners. The descendants of the king form a privileged group; both sons, grandsons, and their children are called *kwareth*. The title *kwanyireth dwong* (great *kwanyireth*) is given to the first generation of *kwanyireth* or to a *kwanyireth* who has become a chief.

Apart from the king and the royal family, but having the closest ceremonial connection with the former, are the *ororo*,[1] who trace their origin to the fifth Shilluk king, Ocalo. They play a prominent part

[1] Rightly qualified by Mr. Munro as a "class . . . full of mystery" in his "Installation of the Ret of the Chol (King of the Shilluks)", which we reprint as an appendix. They certainly require further study. Hofmayr states that royal descendants become *ororo* after a special degradation ceremony which has to be carried out by stealth. His account is far from clear, but actually he agrees that the only *ororo* are the descendants of Ocalo (op. cit., pp. 260–2). Mr. Heasty confirms this, and in answer to our questions obtained the following account of the origin of the *ororo*. During the reign of king Ocalo there was trouble between the Nuer and Shilluk. The sons of Ocalo, who led the Shilluk against the Nuer, were all killed except Duwad, considered very insignificant by the king, who felt that there would be no chance of one of his offspring reigning since all his important sons had been killed. In a rage Ocalo took the sacred spears of Nyakang and threw them in the river, but Duwad succeeded in rescuing the last and demanded of his father why he did this. When Ocalo answered that his sons were dead, a quarrel ensued between father and son, leading Duwad to say that the sacrifices to his father should not be killed with a spear and to threaten to degrade his father's descendants. When Duwad became king his half-brothers were degraded to the level of commoners, with the name Nyigol instead of their previous appellation Kayo. As compensation they were granted an important part in the installation and funerary rites of the king, as well as in certain religious ceremonies at Fashoda.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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classes of people, animals, and even things, in which Nyakang may be immanent or with which he is associated.

The chief incarnations and manifestations of Nyakang are as follows :—

1. The spirit of Nyakang is regarded as closely associated with certain shrines, which are in fact cenotaphs, for though spoken of as his tombs it is well known that he is not buried in any of them.

2. Each Shilluk king incarnates the spirit of Nyakang.

3. This is equally true of certain animals, and may possibly apply to all the members of particular species, as it certainly does to individual members.

4. The spirit of Nyakang is regarded as being present, at any rate at certain times, in his wooden effigy kept at Akurwa.

There are ten cenotaph "tombs" of Nyakang (*kengo Nyakang*) in the Shilluk country, the most important being at Akurwa and Fenikang. Each shrine consists of a group of two or more huts—of the same circular form but rather larger than dwelling huts—together with a small more or less circular enclosure, called *ludi*, neatly fenced with millet stalks. The huts are particularly well thatched, and the apex of the roof terminates in an ostrich egg from which there projects the blade of a spear, while the surrounding fence is kept in notably good repair. These huts, with the enclosed area, are sacred, for, with the exception of the priests of Nyakang and the old people concerned in keeping them clean, no one may enter the enclosure or even approach it without due cause. In 1910 the Akurwa shrine consisted of two huts, that at Fenikang of five, and these shrines, designed on the plan of a Shilluk homestead (with, however, the addition of the *ludi*), are so built because they are regarded as the homes of Nyakang.

The attendants and priests of the royal grave shrines and the cenotaph shrines of Nyakang are known as *bareth* (lit. "king's wife"). This term includes certain old men, who appear to have an hereditary connection with the shrine (but on this matter we are unable to be precise), ex-wives of kings, who having borne a reasonable number of children [1] or attained the menopause are sent to take charge of shrines, and men and women of advanced years who are liable to more or less epileptiform attacks, held to indicate possession by Nyakang or a dead king. The *bareth* keep the shrine clean, receive the sacrifices,

[1] Hofmayr states that the royal wives do not commonly bear more than three children; after this they are sent to a shrine and become *bareth* (op. cit., 140).

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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and officiate in the ceremonies, but it is perhaps true to say that only the beasts for minor sacrifices (recovery from illnesses, etc.) are killed by them. Hofmayr states that the distinctive mark of the *bareth* is a necklace of disc beads of ostrich egg-shell, but that they also wear anklets of glass beads, white and green. The *bareth* eat the flesh of the sacrifices and drink the milk of the cattle belonging to the shrine; they are responsible too for the disposal of the bones of the sacrifice, which they cast into the river.

The contents of the *kengo* vary, but they always include certain sacred spears, called *alodo*, representing those used by Nyakang and his companions.

In 1910 we were told that one of the five huts of the Fenikang shrine was in a special sense the house of Nyakang, which he was thought to inhabit. It was distinguished by a number of very rough paintings on its outer wall, some of which could be recognized as representing animals, but we could not learn that the paintings had any special significance. Before the door of the hut were a number of horns of the cattle slain in sacrifice (in 1911 wrongly described as elephant tusks), their broad ends thrust into the ground; within there were said to be skins on the floor, as if for Nyakang to rest upon. Some of the "spears of Nyakang" (*alodo*) are kept here, and there is in this shrine an extremely sacred stool, which may be kept in this hut or may be preserved with some of the sacred spears and a number of elephant tusks in one of the other huts of the shrine, used by the guardians and for storing the millet brought as offerings when the crop is cut. In 1921 we were struck afresh with the resemblance of the shrine to a homestead, with exceptionally large huts; it had been rebuilt since 1910, when we first visited Fenikang, and there were now no horns in front of any hut. At this time (1921) the shrine had been entrusted by the king to the care of a most intelligent elderly Dinka woman, by name Aker—widow of the kings Kur and Fadiet—who was the chief priestess of the shrine. She had three huts and a cattle byre near the shrine; in one hut she kept her beer, and here millet was ground, the two others were for her slaves, who as well as her cattle were provided by the king. We are not certain whether she ever slept in the shrine. According to Shilluk custom Aker had left Kodok during her two pregnancies, but on neither occasion had she been sent to Fenikang; it is, indeed, improbable that a royal wife would be sent to a village containing a shrine, as it might be difficult to accommodate her cattle and those of the shrine attendants as well as the village beasts,

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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776 and habitat. The spirits of the bush are we believe in the main unimportant, but the river people and their river cattle play a more
776 considerable part in the mythology of the people. One of the groups
773 of people whom Nyakang found in the land were fish-men, or river-men with the power of turning into fish, while the mysterious cows whose dung provided the "ashes of denying" (p. 102) had their original home in the river.

643 It is convenient to consider the cult of the dead Shilluk kings apart
769 from that of Nyakang at his cenotaph shrines, but it must be
776 remembered that in every king there is immanent the spirit of Nyakang, so that the worship rendered them at their grave shrines is ultimately only part of the cult of Nyakang.

778 Like the cenotaph shrines of Nyakang the royal grave shrines are
764 called *kengo*, as opposed to the graves of commoners for which the
643 word is *roro*.[1] Though smaller, they resemble the shrines of Nyakang in appearance, for the roofs of their constituent huts terminate in
[346] ostrich egg and spear-head. The guardians or priests (*bareth*) of
[793] these shrines are of the same class as those of the *kengo Nyakang*, viz. elderly women, often widows of the dead king, and old men, his former servants, or their descendants who have reached the requisite age, or, as a last resource when none of these can be found, old women or old men not specially connected with the dead king. Just as no one except the *bareth Nyakang* is allowed to enter the shrines of Nyakang, so no stranger may enter the royal grave shrines.
[644] A royal daughter never becomes a guardian of a shrine, but she may enter the grave shrine of her dead father and rub her hands on its floor for a blessing whenever she likes, as may the royal sisters. It seemed that these privileges did not extend to the shrines of other dead kings, nor even to the enclosed space around them. Should the
[787] spirit of a dead king appear to a royal daughter or sister in a dream and demand an offering, she would take a sheep to the guardians of the tomb and give it to one of them to sacrifice in the same way as
[782] a commoner. There are cattle belonging to the grave shrines of the kings, and offerings are made as at the shrines of Nyakang. Thus, when the millet crop threatens to fail, or epidemic sickness to attack the cattle, Nyakang or one of his successors will appear to someone in a dream and demand a sacrifice. This is told to the king, who will immediately send a cow and a bullock to one or more of the shrines

[798 643] [1] So kings do not "die", but "go away", and in addressing the king a special court language is employed.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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643 778 764 of Nyakang, if Nyakang has appeared, or to the grave shrine of the appropriate king if the dreamer has seen one of the later Shilluk kings. The bullock is killed and the cow added to the herd belonging to the shrine.

It is usual for the harvest ceremony (already alluded to on p. 80) to be performed at the royal grave shrines as well as at the shrines of Nyakang, though it is recognized that this is not absolutely necessary. Again, each king soon after his installation sends or should send presents to the grave shrines of his predecessors, treating these in the same way as he treats the shrines of Nyakang, though the presents need not be so lavish. So, too, sick folk send animals to be sacrificed as offerings at the shrines of their kings, just as they do to the shrines of Nyakang.

771 643 At this point it will be convenient to anticipate the conclusions to which the next few pages will lead, and point out that the actual working religion of the Shilluk is the cult of Nyakang, depending upon the acceptance of the following beliefs: (1) the immanence in each king (*reth*) of Nyakang, (2) the conviction that the king must not be allowed to become ill or senile, lest with his diminishing vigour the cattle should sicken and fail to bear their increase, the crops should wither in the fields, and men, stricken with disease, should die in ever increasing numbers. It follows that the *reth* of the Shilluk must be numbered among those rulers whom Sir James Frazer has called "divine kings", and though, as in many instances in other countries, every precaution is taken against accidental death, the Shilluk kings are (or were) killed in order to avoid those disasters which their senescence was thought to bring upon the state.

643 Although there is no doubt that the kings of the Shilluk were killed ceremonially when they began to show signs of old age or ill-health, it is extremely difficult to ascertain exactly what was done, and a good deal of Shilluk folklore is enshrined in the accounts commonly given of the killing of the *reth*. According to these, any royal son (*nyireth*) had the right to attempt to kill the king, and if successful to reign in his stead. The killing could only take place [644] at night, for during the day the king would be surrounded by his friends and bodyguard and no aspiring successor would have the least chance of harming him. At night the king's position was very different; alone in his enclosure with his wives, and with no men to protect him except a few herdsmen whose huts were situated at a little distance, he was represented as passing the night in constant

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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hours in the shrine of Nyakang; this old man was smeared with flour, and was so betrodden by the multitude that he usually succumbed.[1] Now, or perhaps at an earlier stage of the ceremony, a girl of about ten is presented to the king-elect by men of *kwa* Okal, a clan traditionally descended from the old inhabitants of the land who became the friends and dependents of Nyakang.[2]

At last the king-elect enters Fashoda, *ororo* on either side of him, and is taken to the shrine of Nyakang, in front of which, its legs held by the *ororo*, is the sacred four-legged stool brought from Akurwa. Upon this is placed the effigy of Nyakang, presumably held in place by an *ororo*; these sacred objects are shielded from the general view by a sheet of cotton cloth held in front and at the sides, the shrine forming a screen behind them. Within the enclosed area are certainly the king-elect, the *nya kwer*, and the man holding "Nyakang"; whether there are others is uncertain. According to one account the king-elect, wrapped in a cowhide, is laid on the ground on a leopard skin in front of Nyakang; he clasps a drum, and the whole assembly beseeches the spirit of Nyakang to protect and bless the new ruler. The *ororo* crouch behind the king, while women, singing and dancing, encircle the recumbent group. Whether these details are accurate or not it is certain that after a short time the statue of Nyakang is withdrawn by the *ororo* from the stool, on which the king now seats himself, remaining motionless in prayer and communion with his ancestors for perhaps a quarter of an hour. Meanwhile water is heated in the specially built temporary "homestead"—consisting we believe of three huts—into which the king will withdraw when he retires from the shrine of Nyakang, and certain of the king's wives wash his feet with hot and with cold water, in order that he may be neither too "cold" nor too "hot" with his people. A bull provided by the *kwa* Ajol has been led before the door of the king's special

[1] There is obviously more ceremonial in connection with this man than we have indicated, or else there were two human sacrifices, but details were not easy to elicit. Aker informed us that the victim would be lying unbound when the king stepped over him, touching him with his right foot as he did so, for if this were not done the country would sicken and fail. This took place near the shrine of Nyakang, apparently as the king approached the sacred stool; the "great ones"—including certainly the *jang dwong*—assembled near the shrine and each spat into a bowl of porridge, which was then eaten by the victim, who was left exposed, tied up—or perhaps pegged out—until dead, though it was not expected that he would die the same night. It was said that the victim was not selected from any special clan or place. [782]

[2] This girl, known as the *nya kwer*, attends the king-elect during the ceremonies of installation and later is given in marriage—he does not marry her himself—according to his wishes. *Kwa* Okal formerly received a large payment in spears and cattle for providing this girl. Whether she at one time was taken to wife by the king and in any way resembled the *dak kir* of the Acholi is a matter for future investigation. [644]

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

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[648]

by side with Arabs and other Mohammedan people, should have preserved their own heathen form of worship, and should, with a few exceptions, look down rather with contempt on the religion of the foreigners. Partly this is explained by their conservativeness and self-confidence, and partly by the fact that their intercourse with Mohammedans was almost exclusively hostile. Whether now that the Pax Britannica makes slave-dealing and raiding impossible and new ideas slowly penetrate the country, Islam will make greater progress, the future will show. A gradual peaceful conquest of the country by Islam is not improbable, because civilisation, as it comes to these people, wears an outspoken islamic stamp.

On Christian Mission work among the Shilluks vide the end of Introduction.

V. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.

643 [171] [644]

RESIDENCE OF THE KING

The Shilluks are the only people of the Sudan who have a Kingdom [1]. The king resides at Fashoda. His residence consists in a large number of huts for himself, his numerous wives and other members of his family and for guests. He possesses large herds of cattle, goats and sheep. When a person of some respect pays him a visit, the king presents him with an ox. — The royal robe consists in a leopard skin. They have also a coronation robe of leopard skin and ostrich feathers, which has been handed down from many generations. The present king has a gorgeous red robe presented by the governor, which he wears on occasions when he meets the higher English officials.

ELECTION

The kingdom of the Shilluks is hereditary in so far as the king must always be a member of the royal family, that is, of the descendants of Nyikang, and only a person whose father has been a king, may be elected. There are three houses of the royal family, and the king is elected from each of these royal branches in turn. If there are several brothers in the branch whose turn it is to have the kingship, upon the death of the king one of these brothers will be elected. But in case there is no vacancy during the life of these three brothers, then the sons of the eldest will be in line for the throne.

Fadygt is the present king. He is of the house of Kwat Ker. When he dies, the kingship will pass to the house of *Yē*; at the death of the king from the house of *Yē* it will be the turn of the house of *Ńeḍǫk*. Thence it will return to the house of Kwat Ker, but not to a son of *Fadygt*, but to one of the king's brothers. When it has gone around the circle again, it will be the turn of a son of *Fadygt*. There seem to be two branches of each house, so that when a king dies, it will be the turn of his eldest son to become king, after five kings have reigned and died. There have been other royal houses, but they have lost their

[1]) "king" is in Shilluk *rīŋ* or *rŋ̄ŋ*; in older literature the word "bondu" is given as the Shilluk name for king. By Europeans the king is commonly called mek, which is a contraction of the Arab malik.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

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right to the throne. If all the sons of a king die, before it is the turn of one of them to become king, that family loses its royal prerogatives. A left-handed or otherwise deformed man cannot be crowned. When from such or a similar reason the son of a king fails to be crowned, his posterity loses the right to the throne.

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As a rule only a man can be king; though once a queen reigned, she apparently did not command a great authority, vide page 149; and it is characteristic that in the lists given by Banholzer and Dr. Giffen her name is not mentioned.

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The way in which the king is elected, vide page 122 ff. Of course frequently party intrigues are at work on these occasions, and it may have been not quite an uncommon occurrence that there were several candidates for the throne, supported by different factions; sometimes there were even two kings, residing in different places of the country.

POWER OF THE KING

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The power of the king was, previous to the British occupation, absolute; he disposed on life and death of his subjects. The subjects had to pay heavy taxes in cattle, durs, boats, skins for clothes, and under certain circumstances, in persons also.

JURISDICTION

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All judicial cases may be brought before the king, with whom lies the final decision. They have an unwritten code of law, providing fixed penalties and fines. Cattle thieves were formerly killed on the spot by the owner of the stolen property. If the thief escaped, but was located with the stolen thing, the owner demanded it. In case the thief refused to give it up and the owner was unable to get it by force, he then reported to his chief, and if he failed there, the matter went to the king, who punished the man perhaps by taking his property and some girls from his village for himself.

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In the case of certain infractions of the law the convict became the slave of the king, and could no more return to his home. These slaves are known as *tyɛ̈ɛ̈ cwɛ̈k* ("men of crime") or *adʒɛ̈ŋ*. The king gives to such a man a wife. Their children are slaves at the royal court and are called *adʒɛ̈ŋ*. To the male descendants of such the king gives wives, and the females are taken to be given to male members of the *adʒɛ̈ŋ* class as wives. If the king does not have enough girls in the *adʒɛ̈ŋ* class to supply all the young men with wives, he buys free girls for the purpose, their descendants become also slaves.

In some cases the criminal becomes the slave of a chief; these are also called *adʒɛ̈ŋ*.

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Murder cases were tried by a court of chiefs and the king. If the man was condemned, he was disgraced in many ways before the people. Sometimes he was led about the village with a cow-rope around his neck, and then executed by hanging. If a man was executed on account of a crime, his whole family

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*539 *Kine: à, dɔ̰ɔ̀h, kɛ̰ɛ̀, kɔ̰lú jwɔ̰k! Ka gɛ bɛ̰ŋɔ. Ka gɛ waŋɛ fɔ̄ɛ gɛn, ka būl gɛ̀ch, ka tɛ̰rɔ chɛ̰ŋó kɛ́ bɔ̀l. Ka gɛ lɛ̰gɔ: wuna yìk tɛ̰rɔ, í, wɛ́ dúɔ̀k, dɛ bɛ̰t pɛ́ɛ́ mɔ̰ɛ̀.*

539 224 643 651 The people go hunting game, a game for the king, a gyɛk-antelope. And all the people go, they are many, and the chiefs address them: "O ye people, (hear) a commandment of the king, concerning the gyɛk-antelope, which belongs to the king: if any man let the game escape, he shall surely be fined!" Then they pray: "O Nyikang, this matter is under your auspices! Do not suffer us to have any mishap! You grandfather of man, kill the game well, so that we may incur no debts! May it be killed well, o Nyikang!" Then a goat is brought, it is speared; a fowl is brought and cut up. Now the hunting-party arises, each part (goes) in a different direction. And when many antelopes have been killed, the people come back, and the chiefs assemble, and the game is brought before them; when they have brought it all, the big (district-) chief divides the animals, and says: "This chief shall take this, and this one shall take that;" then he says: "Tan it!" And they tan it. When they have finished tanning, the skins are brought before the chief for examination. The chief (when he has examined them) says: "All right!" Again he says: "Shall we not bring them (to the king)?" He seizes a cow, which they take with them (to Fashoda); all the chiefs assemble, and go to Fashoda. When they arrive there, they ask for permission to enter (the royal court). It is said to the king: "The chiefs have come." They greet the king: "Our Lord, we have come." He asks: "What do you bring?" They answer: "We have brought royal goods." The king asks: "How many?" They reply: "Sixty." He answers: "Very well." Then the king brings a big steer, and gives it to the chiefs. The steer is killed, and the chiefs stay to eat it, together with a cow. Then they ask the king for permission to go: "Our lord, shall we not go now? (we will go now!)". The king answers: "Why, hold fast (to) God (that is: stay!)" So the chiefs remain; and beer is strained, and they stay to drink. Afterward the king says: "Well, all right, go now with God!"

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When they come home and approach their villages, the drum is beaten, and the people dance to the drum; then they address the people; "O ye people, we have returned; may the country live in peace!" [1]

28. Making Boats for the King.

*539 *A kɛ̰ɛ̀ tɛ̰rɔ bɛ́ ɲwɔ̰t kì yɛ́t, yɛ̰ɛ̀te kwɛ̀r, ka tɛ̰rɔ ɲɔ̀dɔ̀, ka yɛ́t kɔ̰̀l, kɛ́ tɛ̰rɔ̀ lɛ̰ɲɔ̀, ka tɛ̰rɔ waŋí fach. Ka jāgɔ chwɔ́l, ka yɛ́t tyɛr kɛ́ ɔ̀ nɛ̰ŋɔ, ka e kɔ̰pɔ mɛ̀, ka e kɔ: kwaá yɛ́t ak! Ka kwáá, ka e kɔ: mɔk an ba mɔk rìɲ, ka mɔk an tyɛ́ɛ́, ka gɛ kwɔ́ch, ka gɛ lɛ̰ŋɔ gin keau Bachōdɔ.*

[1] The dyɛk-antelope belongs to the king, out of its hide clothes for the king's wives are made.

NORTHERN PROVINCE (GERR)

631 Hkomo Dolelajak Athodwoi Detwok Golbany Fashoda

SOUTHERN PROVINCE (LUAK)

Wau Malakal Detin Fanyikang Tung

These have little political importance though they are said to have been made by the order of Nyikang. They have the tradition of co-operation when necessary to meet a common danger or a difficult situation. This tendency of contiguous settlements to combine for warfare was utilised by the Turkish government and is now used by the Anglo-Egyptian government to form administrative units. Originally, the associations were not permanent enough to be regarded as politically important.

The Provinces

Shilluk country is divided into two great provinces, Gerr and Luak (Northern Shillukland and Southern Shillukland), which are ritually important but have little administrative significance. The boundary dividing the two provinces is a water-course called Khor Arepajur, just south of Fashoda. The chief of Debalo Kwon, just south of Arepajur, is, through his office, the chief of Luak. The chief of the settlement of Golban, north of Khor Arepajur, is chief of Gerr.

Apart from these, only two other chiefs and divisions counted. These were the chiefs of the settlements forming the northernmost and southernmost regions of Shillukland, the chiefs of Hkomo and Tonga.(1) Fashoda, the capital of Shillukland, occupied by the *reth*, is the focal point of the structure of the Shilluk people and this is clearly seen, not only in administrative matters but in ritual and myth and in the circumstances surrounding the installation of the *reth*.

SOCIAL DIVISIONS

614 The Shilluk people are divided into four main classes or groups of clans:

The Kwareth

565 614 644 This is the royal clan, the largest of all clans and, like the others, is spread through all parts of the country. All members trace their descent, in the male line, from Nyikang and only a member of the royal clan and one whose father has been a *reth* is eligible for election to the kingship. Within the *kwareth* are four main titles.

(a) *Reth* - The reigning king.
(b) *Nyireth* - The son or daughter of a *reth* - whether reigning or dead.

(1) See Evans-Pritchard, *The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk*, 1948, p.9.

(c) *Nyareth* - The son of a *Nyireth*.
(d) *Kunyireth* - The grandson of a *Nyireth*.

In some regions the members of the royal clan have become more numerous than commoners and have supplanted them in the chieftainship of the settlements. This has been possible because the members of the royal clan are richer and tend to marry more wives, and also because of the system whereby the offspring of a *reth* are planted out in various settlements away from Fashoda. When one of the *reth*'s wives is about to give birth to a child she leaves Fashoda and goes to her own village. As soon as the *nyireth* is weaned he is placed in charge of some trustworthy settlement chief, often the mother's brother, and is brought up among his mother's people. When the child grows up and marries he builds a separate hamlet called *pa nyireth* (unless he is called on to become *reth*), and thus becomes the founder of a local lineage branch of the royal clan which may eventually grow powerful enough to overthrow the dominant lineage and assume the political aspects of its position in the settlement.

Daughters of a *reth* are not allowed to marry and therefore cannot start lineages which would count as sister's sons to the royal house.

The Ororo

This clan is separate from the royal clan and consists of the descendants of a disinherited branch. They are few in number and may intermarry with the royal clan. It is said that the *reth* still has the right to disinherit lineages of the royal clan but, apart from one traditional instance, it is not certain whether the right has been exercised. The *ororo* are indistinguishable from the commoner clans except for the special functions they perform for the *reth* at his investiture and at the time of his funeral. Traditionally, the *ororo* always smother the *reth* when he is ritually killed. The *reth* always takes some of his wives from the *ororo*.

The Bang Reth

The *bang reth* are the personal attendants of the *reth*. Originally they were captives from other tribes but later, volunteers from the commoner clans in Shillukland, if they were poverty stricken, might leave their own clans and become the *reth*'s retainers. In return for receiving cattle to marry with, they tended animals, engaged in building and cultivation and performed all the duties connected with the upkeep of the royal household. Apart from these and their descendants, the *bang reth* also included all those who were enslaved because their brothers were homicides and those who became possessed by the spirit of Nyikang.

The *bang reth* are a fictitious clan; they cannot intermarry even though there is often no blood relationship among them. The *reth* never marries into the *bang reth* clan and, as an indication of the impossibility of this, he calls the daughter of a retainer *kwaro*, 'my grand-daughter'.

The *bang reth* live in a hamlet of their own near the capital in which the *reth* resides. When he dies they, together with his elderly widows, go and live near his shrine and look after it. When a *nyireth* is planted out, his father sends some of his retainers to live with him; these become *bang*

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nyireth and their descendants continue to live near those of the *nyireth* as a fictitious lineage.

The Colo

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The *colo* consists of the main body of Shilluk clans, of which there are about a hundred. They are patrilineal clans tracing descent from the original followers of Nyikang, and also from those who have since migrated into and settled in Shillukland or were in occupation when the Shilluk immigrants arrived under Nyikang's leadership. Their origins are obscured in myth.

The *colo* clans like the *kwareth* are patrilineal and exogamous and marriage occurs between them. The difference is that the *kwareth*, through their connection with the founder of the present Shilluk regime and their ritual importance to the people as a whole, are treated with special respect and have special privileges.

CENTRAL AND LOCAL ORGANISATION

The Reth

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The Shilluk people recognise one supreme head, the *reth*, who represents the country as a whole, regardless of territorial, social or kinship divisions. According to Shilluk tradition the present *reth* is thirty-first of the royal line which began with Nyikang, who led the Shilluk into their territory, conquered it, and established the social order. The spirit of Nyikang is thought to reside in every *reth* and to be passed from one to another down the line of his successors.(1)

The Settlement Chief

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The settlement chief is traditionally directly responsible to the *reth* and executes his orders. He has certain religious obligations to the *reth*, such as building a house at Fashoda or maintaining the local shrine of Nyikang. The chief settles disputes in his territory, endeavours to keep order and harmony and to lead in community matters. He is selected by the lineage heads of the settlement and not by the *reth* who merely recognises his authority and position by investing him with the *lau*, personally knotting this robe over the *jago*'s shoulder.

The Headman of the Hamlet

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The *jol dwong par* has a status which varies according to whether he is headman of the principal hamlet of a lineage - in which case he is also a representative of his lineage within the settlement - or whether he is the headman of a subsidiary hamlet, in which case he is hamlet headman only and merely the senior member of a group of homesteads. The headman of a principal hamlet often receives a *lau*, sometimes directly from the *reth*, in other cases from the settlement chief. This, however, is only in confirmation and recognition of his status and there is no question of appointment by the *reth* or the *jago*. The headman of a principal hamlet represents

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk*, 1948, p.9.

It would appear, therefore, that in judicial and administrative matters the Shilluk reth is far from being an over-riding or autocratic political authority. Local chiefs seem to be free to follow their own traditional courses without much interference. In actual powers of government and administration, and in personal prerogative, the *reth* may be little more than a mediator in disputes and perhaps the balancing force which decides a quarrel one way or another. It is in ritual matters that his real position and powers are indicated.

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THE RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RETH

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Evans-Pritchard writes: "Both his functions and his status are primarily of a ritual order. He makes sacrifices on important occasions, especially for rain and for victory in war, and it is his duty to provide cattle for the sacred herds of Nyikang at Nyilual and Wau and a canoe for Nyikang's shrine at Nyibudho.(1)

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It is noticeable that everywhere there is the closest connection between the political structure and the religious cult.

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(a) The territorial segments and their association with certain dominant lineages are explained in terms of the myth of Nyikang's division of the country among his followers who became the founding ancestors of many of the Shilluk clans.

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(b) The lineage heads who are chiefs of settlements have ritual duties to the kingship. They perform ceremonial services at the time of the *reth*'s investiture, are responsible for building huts in Fashoda and for the upkeep of Nyikang's shrines and those of past *reths*. The tombs of the dead kings are indistinguishable from the shrines of Nyikang and have the same ceremonial importance in rain-making ceremonies, harvest rituals and so forth.

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(c) The traditional customs of the people and the organisation of society in every way are considered to be the work of Nyikang directly or acting in the line of *reths*.

(d) The identification of Nyikang with the king is the central point of the Shilluk political, ritual and moral system. The people believe that Nyikang reigns and manifests himself in the *reth*. Nyikang is also the medium between the Shilluk and Juok - their chief spirit. The Shilluk consider the *reth* to be in close communication with the mystic forces of life, and Nyikang is the connecting link, participating in Juok as he does in the *reth*.(2)

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The *reth* is considered to come under the category of Divine kings, as described by Frazer in *The Golden Bough*. This is clear from the mode of his death and succession as well as from the duties he performs during his lifetime.

Succession of the Reth

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Only the son of a *reth* who has reigned is eligible, and a *nyireth* may

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk*, 1948, pp.16-17.
(2) Ibid., p.18.

attempt to usurp the throne any time after killing the *reth*. The *reth*'s sons and the sons of previous *reths* are potential rivals and are not allowed within Fashoda at night. The *reth* takes precautions to avoid this danger. It is not known in which hut he sleeps and he is said to wander round at night looking for intruders. This practice of regicide no doubt accounts for the planting out of the *reth*'s sons from the time of their birth.

The Death of a Reth

The *reth* is considered to have some mystic connection with the world of nature, and the state of his health has an effect on the fertility of the land, on the rains, the harvests and on the general material and spiritual welfare of the people. If the *reth* becomes weak, the people suffer and he must be killed. If he were allowed to die naturally the spirit of Nyikang might be lost to the Shilluk for ever. There are a number of traditions relating to the traditional mode of death suffered by the *reth*. One maintains that the *reth* is strangled or suffocated by his wives if he shows signs of senility; another that he was walled up alive in a hut. The *reth* may be killed by a rival claimant to the throne at any time. Evans-Pritchard considers that the ceremonial putting to death of kings is probably a fiction; there is no historical evidence for it and some Shilluk kings seem to have reigned until they were quite old. Both Howell and Evans-Pritchard consider that there is a close connection between the tradition of killing the king, because of the bad effects of his waning vitality, and the tradition that a rival claimant should seize the throne ".... we must interpret Shilluk statements about the matter as indicating not that any prince may slay the king on his own initiative, as has been suggested, but that any prince may lead a rebellion as the candidate of discontent, particularly of the part of the kingdom to which the prince belongs. If the king has lost support in the part to which he belongs he will probably lose also both the resulting contest and his life in it."(1) If this is so, the traditions of king-killing are perhaps an interpretation, couched in symbolic terms, of the actual course of events following a rebellion against the *reth*.

ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF THE RETH

Detailed descriptions of the installation of a new *reth* have been given - apart from information by Nornal - by Howell and Thomson who were in Shilluk land at the election of King Fafiti Yor in 1943 and of his successor, King Anei in 1944. In the events described by them the political, ritual and symbolic nature of the *reth* and the importance of the Nyikang myths may be clearly seen. In addition, the relationships between the various social divisions and between the territorial and kinship segments may be perceived in action. The whole tribe participates in some degree, for a series of ceremonies is carried out by the clans, in which each has a special traditional role to play.

The interregnum is a period of danger, owing to the war which may break out over the choice of a successor and owing to the absence of the

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk*, 1948, pp.34-5.

8:Howell E-4.5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

thing

One other offence which is recognized by the Shilluk and is also known to Nuer and Dinka is *thing*. This refers to fornication with a woman who is pregnant or lactating. Should the woman abort the child, or the child die subsequently, four head of cattle are claimed. This applies, of course, only to married women and in effect means that a man must pay four head of cattle for adultery where in other circumstances he would only pay two.

Sexual Offences Concerning Female ejwöth

It is a rigid rule among the Shilluk that no female *ejwöth*[1] may marry or indeed have sexual relations with any man. It is possible that in the past they were more strictly guarded and deterrents in the form of severe punishment were more rigidly applied.

Seligman says,

> . . . the daughters of a king must remain unmarried, the alleged reason for this being that it is unfitting that the daughter of a king should marry a commoner, while she could not marry a *nimer* (king's son) since this would be incest. The prohibition of marriage does not, however, extend to all intercourse; a king's daughter is allowed to select lovers as she chooses, and nothing is said so long as it is not publicly known that she has become pregnant; but if this were discovered she would be killed, as would also the man responsible for her condition. This rule, which until recently appears to have been strictly carried out, led to frequent production of abortion.[2]

This rule is still insisted on by the *reth*, though clearly it is ineffective nowadays since *ejwöth* have become something of a problem to the Administration. Writing in 1946, Thomson says that female *ejwöth* can be divided into two classes: (*a*) those who cohabit with Police and 'Malakia' (detribalized urban elements) and (*b*) those who live in Shilluk country.

The former class appears to be numerous, and has gained notoriety owing to its pursuing its trade largely in Malakal. I believe it forms a small minority of female *ejwöth*. Some of them live faithfully with their unmarried husbands, others are more flighty and others again are prostitutes. As long as these *ejwöth* remain in Malakal or Kodok they are merely objectionable on moral grounds.

The latter class is a menace to tribal society. Their habits are similar to the female *ejwöth* who consort with 'Malakia', but in this case the 'husband', being of Shilluk blood, feels bound by tribal custom and its distortions. The tribal custom appears to be that the first time a female *ejwöth* becomes pregnant the lover has to pay ten head of cattle (*kwor*) to the *reth*. In the old days it was held to be a disgrace for a female *ejwöth* to give birth and abortion was frequently practised. The ten head of cattle to the *reth* would not be objectionable, if it could be looked on as bride-price (which it is not). If this were so, the *reth* would have a personal interest in the fidelity of the *ejwöth*, as the bride-price would, of course, be returnable on divorce. It would be right that this bride-price should go to the *reth* as being either father of the girl or in *loco parentis*.

This custom has, I think, largely fallen into contempt and I doubt whether the number of cattle reaching Fashoda amounts to very much. This does not mean that the list of the

[1] *Nyiwöth*, daughter or son of a *reth*.

[2] Seligman, e.g. 'The Cult of Nyakang and the Divine Kings of the Shilluk'. *Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories*, Khartoum, 1911, p. 228.

8:Howell E-4,5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

lover is any less hard. In place of a recognised tribal fine or compensation he is now a victim of blackmail. The *ayirith* whom he is living with proceeds as follows 'Give me a cow or I will tell.' This may go on until the lover's capital is exhausted and the *ayirith* with her child or children moves off in search of further prey. The lover has no redress as the whole arrangement is outside tribal custom, and the *ayirith* prospers from her blackmail and promiscuity.[1]

I do not propose to discuss here the reasons for the bar against marriage or sexual intercourse with the daughters of reigning or former *reths*. I have sometimes heard Shilluk say that compensation for illicit intercourse with any woman of the royal clan should really go to the *reth*. There is, however, an obvious distinction between offences committed with daughters of *reths* and with other females of the royal clan. In the first case, all forms of sexual union are barred and any infringement of the rule is a crime against the *reth* himself and all he stands for. Moreover female *ayiraths*, not being allowed to marry, are in a sense males. Hence sexual relationship with them by a male amounts to perversity and perversity is not a mere private delict but a spiritual offence likely to react upon society as a whole. Shilluk say that theoretically the *ayirith* and her lover should be put to death, but the offence is now compoundable by payment of a fine. The principles of punishment and expiation are involved, not merely restitution. In the case of all other female *kwareth*, the offence lies not in the fact of sexual relationship, but in an illicit relationship amounting to an infringement of rights which apply to all members of Shilluk society. The wrongdoer pays the indemnity in order to right that wrong. In accepting compensation for offences against other women of the royal clan the *reth* is acting as the recognised head of that clan and has a right to receive and redistribute (which in fact he usually does) the wealth which belongs to the clan collectively. The former is therefore more nearly a criminal or public offence, the sanctions being penal, while the latter is a private delict involving the restitutory sanction only. It is worth noting that a closer study of this subject might well lead to a clearer picture of the spiritual functions of the *reth* himself and through him of the royal clan, and also to a more reliable interpretation of his legal functions.

Conclusion

We may conclude by noting that Shilluk marriages have not the complexity, found both in the social processes and the transfer and distribution of bridewealth, which characterizes unions among their Nuer and Dinka neighbours. The principles are, however, comparable. Marriage is achieved by the performance of ceremonies which have both social and ritual aspects. Side by side with these ceremonies is the payment of bridewealth in cattle, goats, sheep, and sometimes cash. Neither is complete without the other and, generally speaking, each stage in the ceremonies is accompanied by further payments of cattle. The *mogho thiak*, the ultimate ceremony of marriage which corresponds approximately to the Nuer *mut* and the Dinka *thak de thiak*, at any rate in its legal implications, will not be performed unless sufficient cattle have already been paid to satisfy the kinsmen of the bride. Conversely, the payment of cattle would not legalize the union without the accompanying ceremonies.

[1] W. P. G. Thomson: unpublished records, 1946.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

year round and only the youths go to the cattle camps in the riverain pastures, which are never more than a few miles from their villages. The Shilluk are not a pastoral people in the sense that the Nuer and Dinka are, and rely to a much greater extent on agricultural products and on fish, for they are skilled and experienced fishermen. Since their migration to their present territory, it is probable that they have never had a very large cattle population, for their riverain pasture is not extensive.[1]

Shilluk clans[2] are not territorial in basis for they are highly segmented and widely distributed throughout the settlements of Shilluk country; as corporate units they have no real significance except at times of national festivals, and then only in the sphere of ritual and ceremony.

The Shilluk are divided into four main classes or groups of clans:

(i) The *kwareth*: the royal house, who trace descent from Nyikang and from whom the *reth* of the Shilluk is chosen.

(ii) The *orero*: a disinherited branch of the royal house who do not differ from commoners except in the special functions they perform at the installation of the *reth*, during his lifetime, and at his death. They are a distinct exogamous clan, though they may intermarry with the *kwareth* despite common ancestry.

(iii) The *collo*: the name refers collectively to the main body of the Shilluk clans of which a large number trace descent patrilineally from (*a*) the original followers of Nyikang, (*b*) individuals of other tribes who have migrated and settled in Shilluk country from early times onwards, and (*c*) ancestors who are lost in antiquity, but who may have occupied Shilluk country before the arrival of Nyikang.

(iv) The *bang reth*: the personal attendants of the *reth*, his wives or wives of past *reths*; the descendants of royal slaves obtained by capture; those who volunteer to serve him by reason of their possession by the spirit of Nyikang,[3] and paupers who volunteer for this form of service in order to exist at all. Finally, there are the alleged descendants of those who were enslaved because their close kinsmen committed homicide, though this statement must be examined more critically later.

There are no real caste distinctions between *kwareth*, *orero*, *collo*, and *bang reth* and, apart from restrictions on the marriages of daughters of a living or past *reth*, they intermarry freely. The *kwareth*, however, by reason of their connexion with Nyikang and subsequent *reths*, are treated with special respect and this extends to those *bang reth* who have close association with the shrines of Nyikang or of dead kings. The Shilluk basic social structure is very similar to that of the Nuer and Dinks, though there are important differences. The segmentation of the population into territorial units and of the clans into localized lineages has, however, a greater permanency and stability. The distinctive feature of the Shilluk political structure is the existence of an established and theoretically omnipotent monarchy and it is in the political sphere

[1] An accurate census taken during the veterinary campaign against trypanosomiasis gives a figure of 85,000. This was after a very severe epidemic in 1926 and it may be assumed that they had lost at least 30 per cent. of their stock. A human census, accurate at any rate within 15 per cent., gives a population figure of 110,000. The ratio of human population to cattle population is therefore between 1:0·3 and 1:0·25. *Cf.* Nuer where highest ratio given is 1:2·3 and the lowest 1:1·2.

[2] *Kwa*: Literally 'descendants of', prefixing the name of the clan. '*Kwa* Okelo'—the descendants of Okelo—and so on.

[3] Often now attendants at the many shrines of Nyikang.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

daughter, would marry out of the lineage, and her bridewealth would be used to marry a wife from elsewhere. I can quote no actual instances of this custom, but it is in keeping with Shilluk ideas, and I believe it to have been common in the past. The indemnity is known in Shilluk as *col dhano*, ' the replacement of a man '. Although the Shilluk do not have an institution comparable to the Nuer and Dinka custom of ' ghost-marriage ',[1] they certainly consider that the continuity of the kinship group must be assured and the acceptance of an indemnity is primarily directed to this object. A wife married with ' blood-cattle ' is called *nya wic dhano*, ' the girl in place of the man ',[2] and although she is not married specifically ' to the name of the dead man ', as would be the case among both Nuer and Dinka, the principles are the same. The primary intention in accepting such payments in cattle is therefore to marry a wife into the dead man's lineage, or to acquire a girl who will either be taken in marriage or received as a daughter from whom bridewealth may be expected. Since bridewealth among the Shilluk is more or less rigidly maintained at ten head of cattle, it is logical that the indemnity for homicide should also be ten.

Among many Nilotic peoples in the past there were different rates of compensation for the taking of human life according to the status of the person killed. Among the Shilluk a greater differentiation might be expected, but there is little evidence of this, though Shilluk themselves say that to kill a member of the royal clan would be a serious offence and in the past was likely to call forth a punitive expedition by the *reth*. It is significant that Hofmayr says: ' To wound a royal prince or princess, or a royal daughter or son of a prince, whether it happens accidentally or intentionally, demands a high penalty for the shedding of royal blood (*a wumo*). In 1912 a boy accidentally injured a royal daughter with a spear and caused only a slight flesh wound. He had to pay six head of cattle (two or three to the King, one to the mother of the girl, and one to the Chief of the village).'

There is normally no distinction in the amount of compensation demanded for the death of a woman. A husband who kills his wife is not expected to pay compensation if he has completed the bridewealth payments. When a woman kills someone, her father or legal guardian is held responsible if she is unmarried; a husband is responsible for the actions of his wife.

As among other Nilotic peoples, when homicide is a joint action, the first man to cause injury to the deceased is held to be responsible for his death.

In the peacemaking negotiations described, the ritual acts and ceremonial procedures are reminiscent of those performed by the ' Leopard-Skin Chief ' among the Nuer, and the ' Chief of the Spear ' among many Dinka tribes. These similarities are seen in the public ceremonies rather than in the special ritual performed to relieve the killer of the spiritual contamination which is believed to follow an act of homicide; this is not surprising, since obviously the *reth* could not deal individually with every killer. Further, it is customary for these functionaries among both Nuer and Dinka to take a small proportion[3] of the ' blood-cattle ' in return for their services;

[1] See Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer*, pp. 109–12. Oxford, 1951.

[2] Mr. J. L. Baker tells me that children born in such circumstances are known as *okir* or *okir* (assuredly to us) which means literally ' father dead '.

[3] For example, out of a total varying between twenty and forty head of cattle, the Nuer *kwar kwac* takes the *yang kwini* in return for his services early on in the negotiations for peace, the *ruath ruw* (' bull calf of blood ') and *yang kwac* (' cow of the leopard-skin '), besides two oxen which he sacrifices at the ceremony. In some parts of Nuerland these might

"Shilloeks were pagans. They were soon afterwards converted Mohamedism for the sake of trading with Cairo and took the name of Fungo, which they interpret sometimes lords or conquerors, and at other times free citizens". 8)

In another statement Bruce hits upon an important aspect of the inner organisation of the state:

"It is one of the singularities which obtains among this brutish people, that the king ascends his throne under the admission that he may be lawfully put to death by his own subjects or slaves upon a council being held by the great officers, if they decree that it is not for the advantage of the State that he be suffered to reign any longer. There is one officer of his own family who alone can be the instrument of shedding his sovereign and kinsman's blood. This officer is called Sid el Coom, master of the king's household or servants, but has no vote in deposing him; nor is any guilt imputed to him however many of his sovereigns he thus murdered. Ashmet Sid el Coom, the present regicide, and resident in Ismain's palace .... seemed, by a strange accident, to be one of the gentlest spirits of any .... at Sennar. His place of birth was a village of Fazugle, and it appeared to me that he was still a pagan". 4)

That was the first time the world ever heard of the name Shilluk, and thus was the beginning of the problem, which is now more than one and a half centuries old. Many authors have supported this opinion of the Shilluk origin of the Fung kingdom, and many as well objected, producing speculations and theories. Others changed their opinions on second thoughts, and until now new handling of the subject and the introduction of new ideas concerning this tangible problem are still forthcoming; but we can summarise these controversies into three major lines:

1) The Shilluk origin of the Fung. 5)

2) The Arab origin of the Fung - or generally the Eastern origin. 6)

3) The Western origin of the Fung, i.e. Darfur or other western Islamic empires of the vast Sudan. 7)

What concerns us in this paper is the first item; that is, broadly speaking, the relations between the Fungs and the Shilluk, while the origin of the Fung themselves is more or less a historical subject.

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3) Seligman, p. 424. (As there is in Vienna but a French translation of Bruce, I prefered to quote him, whenever it was possible, in English from any other book).
4) Seligman, p. 423.
5) Bruce, Arkell, Westermann, (and Crowford to a certain extent).
6) The Fung Chronicles, Awad, Beuscily, and Jackson are for the Arab origin, Chatoway and Nalder are for an eastern origin, i.e. the Fung were sent by Abyssinia to restore order after the fall of Christian Soba.
7) Tremaux, and later on Arkell.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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CHAPTER III.

The Elements of Shilluk Society.

565 The four elements existing to-day in the tribe are *Kwar Reth*, *Ororo*, *Collo* and *Bang Reth*. The first two together comprise all the patrilineal descendants of Nyikang, the last two the subject body of the tribe. There is no outward difference between the members of these four strata of society either in physique or apparel, and although the *Kwar Reth*, and less so the *Ororo*, are usually treated with a certain outward defence by the *Collo*, little of the original practical difference between conquerors and conquered now survives. Numerically the *Collo* vastly predominate. The *Kwar Reth* are simply an enlarged clan and account for perhaps a fifteenth of the tribe[12]. The *Bang Reth* are perhaps a little more numerous than the *Kwar Reth*, and the *Ororo*, who are as will later be seen a mere segment of the *Kwar Reth*, are numerically negligible.

The Kwar Reth.

565 The *Kwar Reth*, like any other clan, is diffused over the country.
614 It has no political authority as such but exists as a disjointed aristoc-
644 racy, physically indistinguishable from its *Collo* neighbours, sometimes providing the settlement chief, but more often not. The Shilluk clan being exogamous the *Kwar Reth* cannot intermarry. Accordingly, with the exception of the *Reth's* daughters who cannot marry at all, they inter-marry with the *Collo* without restraint. Most, though not all of the *Reth's* wives are *Collo*.

554 Within the *Kwar Reth* there are four higher titles. These are
565 *Reth* for the reigning king (who must be a son of a previous *Reth*),
614 *Nyireth* for the son (or daughter) of a *Reth* (reigning or dead), *Nyireth*
644 (or *Nyinyireth*) for a son of a *Nyireth* and *Kwar Nyireth* (elided into *Kwanyreth*) for a grandson of a *Nyireth*. Strictly every member of the *Kwar Reth* has a claim to the title *Kwanyireth*, but in fact its use is restricted to the grandson of a *Nyireth* and any remoter descendant who has achieved some political eminence.

12. This is necessarily a very rough estimate.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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With the exception of *Reth*, these titles must always be prefixed to the name of the person addressed. Alternatively the title alone may be used.

The *Kwar Reth* is vastly bigger than any other clan. The reasons for its abnormal growth are two, namely their comparatively great wealth with the consequent tendency to marry more wives, and the cunning process of dissemination whereby the *Kwar Reth* have been gradually planted out and have taken root in every part of the Shilluk kingdom. It is this latter process which will now be described.

The *Reth* has many wives,[13] most of whom live with him at Fashoda. When one is about to give birth she goes to her own village where the *Nyireth*[14] is born. As soon as he is weaned he is "planted out"[15] into the charge of some reputable *Collo* chief[16] who becomes responsible for his upbringing. In the hamlet of his adoption the *Nyireth* grows up and while small herds the sheep and cattle and plays with the village boys as an equal. When he reaches the age of marriage he builds a separate village nearby which will be known as *Pa Nyireth* and will be the village of the *Nyireth's* descendants. As the descendants of the *Nyireth* increase this original *Pa Nyireth* will put forth offshoot villages in the immediate neighbourhood, and thus we see the process whereby the *Kwar Reth* is planted out takes root and grows in an area owned by a *Collo* lineage. It is by this continually repeated process that the *Kwar Reth* have been and continue to be disseminated throughout the country. Each branch of the *Kwar Reth*, once planted, grows alongside the local *Collo* lineage and tends to eclipse it. Rivalry results, and often the *Kwar Reth* attain to such numerical superiority that they oust the *Collo* lineage from the chieftainship, whereupon the latter either move elsewhere

13. The wife of a *Reth* is known as *bareth*.

14. It is here assumed that the child is male, though *nyireth* covers either sex. If female she will be similarly planted out but of course she will found no lineage.

15. *pidh* (used also for planting out cuttings in a flower bed).

16. The chief entrusted will often be the *bareth's* brother. In any case he cannot refuse this trust which will bring him certain temporary benefits such as milk cows for the *Nyireth's* nurture but which will probably result eventually in his descendants being made subservient to the lineage of the *Nyireth*.

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565 or survive as a subject element in what was originally their own area. Queen Abudok[17] is said to have prophesied that one day the *Kwar Reth* would eat up the *Collo*. This process can certainly be seen 644 occurring in some localities. For example in the areas of Detwok and [173] Atoadwoi the *Kwar Reth* are already probably more numerous than the *Collo*. The process, however, is probably not conscious and there is no marked *esprit de corps* between different branches of the *Kwar Reth*. There are great areas which contain no *Kwar Reth* and others[18] where the *Kwar Reth*, though present, remain subject to the indigenous *Collo* lineage. Though there is everywhere local rivalry the grave view taken by Queen Abudok is probably unjustified.

556 The other reason for the inordinate growth of the *Kwar Reth* 565 is their great wealth. Until the Turkish Government began its not 614 very successful attempts at governing the Shilluk with the assistance 651 of their *Reths* the latter were extremely rich in cattle. They acquired 643 these largely in the following way. Whenever one settlement waged unjustified war upon another or refused repeatedly to obey his order, the *Reth* would raise as a "royal levy"[19] the adjacent settlements, who would go and drive off the malefactors' cattle and burn their villages. The strength of the levy would vary with the readily calculable strength of the opposition but a good margin of safety would be allowed to ensure that the levy would win. It is said that such levies were in fact seldom resisted, the victims being glad to save their skins at the cost of most of their cattle. The participators in the levy got a percentage of the cattle taken but the majority went to the *Reth*.

THE ORORO.

565 *Ororo* is a term used to describe any lineage of the *Kwar Reth* 614 which has been degraded, by act of the *Reth*, to *Collo* rank. Such are 644 described by the Shilluk as being "*Kwar Reth* really, but like *Collo*." 558 Numerically they are inconsiderable, but their origin and status are of

17. A *Nyiroth* who ruled the Shilluk country from Dettim in about 1630.

18. *e.g.*, Awarajuok.

19. *Tish mi Reth*.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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interest. They owe their origin, so it is said, to a battle fought at Detang in the time of *Reth* Odak against the Anuak in which the Shilluk were worsted. In view of this reverse it was decided at a council of war that contrary to custom the *Reth's* sons should all join in the fight on the following day. Accordingly all went across the river to fight except one called Duwadh, and all who went were killed. This left a great many grandsons of Odak who, since only the son of a *Reth* may be appointed, could never become *Reth*. Duwadh, the sole surviving *Nyireth*, in due course became *Reth* and forthwith degraded the lineages of all the slain *Nyireths* and made them "as *Collo*." In this way the *Kwar Reth* was restricted to the descendants of Duwadh. The descendants of the other sons of Odak were dubbed "*Ororo*," the meaning of which is "sons of a crowd of girls."

It is said that the *Reth* has always possessed and still possesses the privilege of pruning the royal tree by this process of excising branches relatively distant from his own. Nevertheless it appears not to have been used except by *Reth* Duwadh on this occasion.[20] *Reth* Fadict tried to degrade the lineage of *Reth* Nyadwai (a prolific monarch whose descendants form an unwieldy branch of the family tree) but was unsuccessful. Had he succeeded they would also now be *Ororo*.

Apparently degradation of a lineage was effected in the following way. Its representatives were summoned and a sprig of thorn having been stuck into the ground the *Reth* speared a bull and pulled the thorn out. By this act the lineage ceased to be *Kwar Reth*. Hence comes the expression "they have no thorn"[21] which is often used to describe the *Ororo*.

The *Ororo* play the part of masters of ceremonies at the induction into Fashoda of a newly appointed *Reth* and have held for at least seven generations the important chiefship of Tonga. For the purposes of

20. It seems possible that in truth the old *Reths* used this device frequently and that the present *Ororo* are not really all sons of Duwadh but are various lineages at one time or another so degraded. This is conjecture, but no member of the *Ororo* will ever say which is the particular son of Duwadh from whom he is descended. They pass over the subject evasively, and it is unusual for a Shilluk to be either reticent or vague about his ancestry.

21. *bung kodh yi gen.*

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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565 614 644 [643] the rules of exogamy the *Ororo* are considered as a *Collo* clan and can intermarry with the *Kwar Reth* as well as with any *Collo* clan other than their own. The *Reth* always has some *Ororo* women among his wives and it is traditionally they who smother him when his powers of procreation are failing.

THE COLLO.

565 The *Collo* comprise the aggregate of subject clans whose various origins are for the most part obscure. A few trace their descent from those who accompanied Nyikang from the neighbourhood of Wau.[22] Others, also few in number, purport to be descendant from Nyikang's collateral relatives.[23] Many claim a mythical origin. Others[24] are avowedly accretions, others[25] again being descendants of the prior inhabitants of the country.

BANG RETH.

565 644 It has already been described how the *Reths* used to keep order in the tribe and how they enriched themselves in the process. With this wealth of cattle they maintained what was an important part of their pomp and executive, namely a large body of retainers knowns as *Bang Reth*. These were recruited in various ways. Originally the [727] main source was captive enemies. In later and more peaceful times [735] they were recruited by voluntary enlistment of those who found themselves in poor circumstances and unable to raise the necessary [614] cattle to marry. Such persons, from the moment they became *Bang Reth*, severed all connexion with their own clan and became the *Reth's* men, pledged to assist him in various ways such as building, tending animals and odd executive duties and receiving in return cattle with which to marry. One method of recruiting *Bang Reth*, which is [682] of great interest in that it shows that there was an idea of certain wrongs

22. *e.g.*, *Kwar* Abogo, *Kwar* Muol, *Kwar* Nyileng and *Kwar* Ojul.
23. *e.g.*, *Kwar* Jur, *Kwar* Othou and *Kwar* Okel.
24. *e.g.*, *Kwar* Jung (who were originally Dinka).
25. *e.g.*, *Kwar* Oman (of Ogod).

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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being crimes against the community, was that in cases of homicide the murderer (or his brother if the murderer was uncaptured) was compelled to become a *Bang Reth*.

Relations between a *Reth* and his retainers were friendly, nor does the treatment of those who were enslaved as a punishment appear to have differed from that of those voluntarily enlisted. The custom was for the retainers of each *Reth* to make a village for themselves near Fashoda. There they would live until the *Reth* died. The *Reth's* body would then be taken to this village and sealed up in a house where it would remain until entirely decomposed. Only then would the bones be removed by his retainers and buried in his original village. Some of the dead *Reth's* retainers would then move to the village where he was buried and their descendants would there remain with the perpetual obligation of tending his shrine. Others would remain at their village near Fashoda and would have no further obligations to the memory of their dead patron except that they and their descendants would for ever be known as "*Bang Reth Kwadhker*" or "*Bang Reth Nyakwac*" or as the case might be.

The retainers of a particular *Reth*, having severed connexion with their own clan, became a fictitious clan in themselves. As such they cannot intermarry, though there may be no relationship of blood. Nor could a *Reth* marry a daughter or sister of one of his retainers. A *Reth* would address the daughter of a retainer as *kwara* (my granddaughter) which well indicates the relationship subsisting between them.

Under the present regime, partly because the Government has frowned upon the practice and partly because the *Reths* are now deprived of their previous source of wealth, the *Reth* has none of these traditional retainers. To-day the *Bang Reth* comprise the descendants of retainers of previous *Reths*. In some cases they have removed themselves to a new locality but in any case they remain for ever *Bang Reth* "A" or *Bang Reth* "B" (in accordance with the name of the *Reth* their ancestors served) and never rejoin their original clan.

When a *Nyireth* was planted out the *Reth* used to send to live with him a few of his own retainers who became *Bang Nyireth* and

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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565 who served the *Nyireth* in his life upon terms analogous to those under
● 644 which *Bang. Reth* served the *Reth*. After the *Nyireth's* death the
[614] *Bang Nyireth* also continued as a fictitious clan. Consequently beside a branch of the *Kwar Reth* are usually found *Bang Nyireth* who are the descendants of the retainers of the *Nyireth* who is the head of that lineage of the *Kwar Reth*.

The *Bang Reth*, whether *Bang Reth* or *Bang Nyireth*, are by
[554] origin *Collo*. Yet their status is slightly inferior to that of the "free" *Collo* and they have therefore been treated as a separate element in this note. The inferiority of their status springs from the fact that they do not belong of right to the area in which they live. They are therefore newcomers, and priority of occupation of land is of great importance to the Shilluk.

CHAPTER IV.

Political Divisions and Organisation.

The Provinces of Luak and Ger and the Old Order.

635 The settlement has already been described as the basic element
[622] in the tribal structure. The settlement chiefs, with few exceptions, are appointed by the *Reth* and this has always been the case. Between the *Reth* and the settlement chiefs there were, before Turkish interference, four high chiefs. The country was then divided into two provinces, Luak in the south and Ger in the north, which were alternatively called *Gol Nyikang* and *Gol Dhiang* respectively[26]. The bound-

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173 26. The terms *Gol Nyikang* and *Gol Dhiang* are a bit archaic and are only heard on ceremonial occasions such as the rebuilding of Fashoda. The origin of the name Gol Nyikang is clearly the tradition that the southern half of the kingdom was settled by Nyikang himself, coupled with the fact that it contains his great shrine at Nyilual. As to the origin of "*Gol Dhiang*" (meaning literally the Gol of the Cow) I am indebted to Mr. L. W. Raven for the following:

"On the death of *Reth* Dhokoth the Shilluk did not accept his son Tugo and called back the "queen" Abudok who had previously ruled after the death of Bucc and had resigned to make way for Dhokoth. Tugo had been living at Athokong and now, with all his father's cattle and retainers, moved to the north and first founded a village at Fadiang, just south of Kodok. Later he built and gave its name to Fashoda. He was followed by the northern chiefs, who had probably not been consulted in the recall of Abudhok. Abudhok then came to meet him at Fashoda, they were reconciled, and Abudhok again resigned. At that meeting Tugo brought a bull to present to Abduhok, and she slaughtered it and in doing so named the north, that is from the Nyigir boundary, as "*Gol Dhiang*," the *gol* of the bull (just then killed). Later Tugo settled his retainers in what is now Golbah, and the chief of them he made responsible for the north and so head of *Gol Dhiang*."

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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tiresome to those who encounter them, do not merit discussion. Subordination and obedience are not in themselves virtues. That the Shilluk are often highly insolent to those in authority is undeniable. This insolence usually takes the form of a supercilious silence and apparent complete disdain implying that "diplomatic relations have now been broken off." This attitude is really not exactly what it seems. In fact it is suppressed rage; but since their symptoms of temper differ from our own we are inclined, often wrongly, to think that it is pure calculated insolence.

The Shilluk have a code of manners which is remarkable. This is instilled into them when young. Even as neatness and order prevail within their houses so are the children taught good manners. When four or five years of age they are made to sit up straight at meals and eat properly. These good manners remain with them through life and distinguish their bearing from that of neighbouring tribes. Doubtless it is in part an empty form but the fact remains that the Shilluk manners are excellent, and their way of sitting in a meeting with their legs drawn backwards to one side and the soles of their feet concealed from view is very neat. No smoking is tolerated at such meetings and their general tone is orderly.

There is a habit, when listening to a superior speaking, of punctuating his remarks with a formal indication of assent. The word thus used varies with the speaker, and is most obvious when the speaker is the *Reth*. Here the word is either *kite kwan* ("the likeness of his ancestor," *i.e.*, Nyikang) or *Kunajuok* ("God's last born"). For members of *Kwar Reth* the word is *Kaiyo*, for the *Ororo* it is *Nyagol* and for some reason for the *Jung* clan it is *Dhiang*.[1]

It has already been explained how certain members of the *Kwar Reth* must be addressed by their titles or with their titles prefixed to their names. There are also certain respectful modifications which must be made to normal speech when speaking to or about the *Reth*, a *Nyireth*, or anyone of importance. These modifications relate largely to verbs of motion. The fiction has to be laboriously maintained that such

1. *Kaiyo* means "eldest born," *Nyagol* means "one of the family" and *Dhiang* means, literally "cow."

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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beings have no motive power other than divine impulse. They are moved always by God. Thus *yi kal Juok* (you have been brought by God) takes the place of *yi bi* (you have come) which is a normal form of greeting among friends.

When the conversation relates to or is being carried on with the *Reth* himself, more complicated modifications are necessary. Objects used by the *Reth* are called differently from their normal names. There are many examples, most of which have been given by Professor Westermann. It is interesting that the names which objects assume owing to their association with the *Reth* are always names of similar but inferior objects. Thus his beer is called "water," his donkey is called his "dog," his spear is his "stick" and, strangest perhaps of all his head is his "pebble."

Elaborate circumlocution is necessary when enquiring about childbirth. A married woman can hardly be asked if she has children or how many had she got. Even a husband should not be asked outright whether or not his wife had produced him children. The husband will be asked "has your wife found something small?" or "has your wife been helped by God?" It is also very bad manners to ask a woman what is the name of her husband.

These conventions might lead one to suppose that matters of sex were regarded as delicate *per se*, but this is hardly the truth. Outside wedlock there is no nicety. An unmarried girl will be asked with brutal frankness "*yi yaci mien*" ("you were made pregnant by whom?") and here the word is the same as that used in talking of domestic animals. The inference is that delicacy is required not because the subject relates to sex but only if and when it touches upon the marriage tie.

No one can deny that the Shilluk are by our standards brutal. Their code dictates that a man may be killed for a man, quite irrespective of the victim's guilt provided only he is from the clan of the killer of the man avenged.

Their moral code, though peculiar, is definite and strictly observed. The marriage tie is not sacrosanct, but rape, as also prostitution, is almost unknown. Both are regarded with abhorrence.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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that Shilluk country once extended as far as Gordon's Tree which is just south of Khartoum. Whether there were Shilluk settlements permanently occupied in that area or whether this represents the furthest point to which they penetrated in raids and hunting parties is not certain.

The Shilluk are now a sedentary people and do not have any large scale migration in search of fresh pastures during the dry season. Their permanent villages, built on the high ground close to the Nile, are occupied all the year round, and only the youths go into the cattle camps, which are never more than a few miles from the villages. The cattle camps are mostly situated on islands and dried out watercourses which run parallel to the river.

Territorially the country is divided into two great provinces Gerr and Luak. (Note 1) These two provinces are again divided into further divisions, the functional meaning of which is difficult to discover, but which retain according to Shilluk tradition a vague feeling of mutual co-operation in times of stress. These divisions were made by order of Nyikang. In most cases these divisions have been utilized by the Government for administrative purposes. Finally the country is divided into a large number of settlements, which are made up of many villages. Shilluk clans are not territorial in basis for distinct lineages of one clan may live in many and widely separated settlements. The largest unit exclusively occupied by a kinship group is the village or *bac*.[2]

The Shilluk people are divided into four main classes or groups of clans.

(i) The Kwareth, the royal clan who trace descent from Nyikang and from whom the *reth*[3] is chosen.

(ii) The Ororo, a disinherited branch of the royal house, who do not differ fro[illegible]mmoners except in the special functions

2. See P. P. Howell, "The Shilluk Settlement": *S.N.R.* XXIV. 1941.

3. The word *reth* has often been translated as "king." We prefer to use the Shilluk term throughout.

For Notes see pp. 75 ff.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
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they perform in connection with the *reth*. They are a distinct clan. 565 614 [644]

(iii) The Colo—the name refers collectively to the main body of Shilluk clans (*kwa*), of which there are a large number — trace descent patrilineally from (a) the original followers of Nyikang, (b) those individuals of other tribes who have migrated and settled in Shilluk country from early times onwards and (c) those who are lost in antiquity, but who may have been the people who occupied Shilluk country before the arrival of Nyikang: their traditions certainly confirm this

(iv) The Bang Reth, the personal attendants of the *reth*, his wives or wives of the past *reths*, which are in many case inherited by the successor, and the descendants of the royal slaves obtained by capture from those who volunteer to serve the *reth* by reason of their possession by the spirit of Nyikang, or paupers who volunteer to serve him in order to exist at all, and those persons who were enslaved because their brothers committed homicide 565 567 644

There is no real caste distinction between the Kwareth and Colo. Moreover the Kwareth are themselves a patrilineal clan and therefore exogamous, and there is no mutual ban on marriage between them and the main body of the people, except in the case of the *reth*'s daughters, who are not allowed to marry at all. The Kwareth, however by reason of their connection with Nyikang and previous *reths* are treated with special respect. 565 614 644 [582]

The Shilluk have less cattle than their Nuer and Dinka neighbours and being predominantly sedentary rely more upon agricultural products. Apart from cultivation—almost entirely millet—and the milk and meat from their cattle, the Shilluk supplement their diet with fish and they have the reputation among other tribes of being exceptionally skilled fishermen. Except for the more permanent territorial basis of their settlements, the basic social structure is very 105

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ritual acts, involuntarily by reason of his very existence, the *reth* affects the fortunes and fertility of the tribe and controls the natural phenomena which react upon crops and cattle. The *reth* is therefore the central figure of tribal religion as much as he is the actual symbol of political unity. He is responsible for their welfare and fortunes both spiritually as the present manifestation of Nyikang and temporally as the leading tribal authority. No Shilluk would seriously dispute the *reth's* divine attributes (unless a follower of some alien religion) though some might resist his more mundane powers.

The genealogy of the royal house of the Shilluk goes back for fourteen generations, but Fafiti Yor, who ruled the Shilluk since 1917, was the 29th *reth* because in many cases the succession has passed to brothers of the same generation or even back a generation to an uncle. This is clear from the genealogy recorded by Hoffmeyer and adopted by Seligman and Pumphrey. (*Vide* Appendix IV).

The main factors governing the succession of Shilluk *reths* are these:

1. That only the son of a *reth* who has ruled the Shilluk is eligible. More distant relatives have no claim. The son of a *reth* is entitled *nyireth* in Shilluk.

2. That it is recognized that a *nyireth* may at any time attempt to usurp the throne after killing the *reth*.

3. For this reason the *reth's* sons or sons of previous *reths* are always potentially in opposition to the ruling *reth*, and they are not allowed within the confines of Fashoda at night. Theoretically at any rate, the *reth* must take every precaution to avoid this danger. For example it is never known in which of the many huts he sleeps at night; he is said to move from one to another, and prowls round Fashoda at night if he suspects a marauder. The new *reth* Anei showed us some spears with a special black finish, which he had imported from Dinka country, and

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643 which he said were for his personal use at night, since they would not glint and reveal his movements.

644 591 4. All sons of *reths* are brought up in a village away from Fashoda (either their mother's or that of some Shilluk chief who has agreed to adopt them), and there lead a somewhat secluded life.

The king or *reth* of the Shilluk is a classic example of Frazer's conception of a divine king. The argument resolves itself into the following essentials:-

1. The king has power over nature, which may be exerted voluntarily or involuntarily.
2. He is considered the dynamical centre of the universe.
3. Hence the well-being of the universe depends upon his actions and the course of his life; both must therefore be carefully regulated.

The fourth essential, which Frazer stresses later in the third edition of the *Golden Bough*, is that of 'king killing.' By this he means that the physical condition of the king reacts upon the fortunes of his people and must not be impaired. Therefore, if the king shows signs of senility or physical imperfection, he must be removed, and a successor substituted.[1] The only way to remove him is to kill him. Among the Shilluk there is abundant and current evidence of the first three essentials both in the regulations which control the *reth*'s life and the rites and ceremonies performed at his installation. There is evidence also of 'king killing.' There are in fact two forms of 'king killing' among the Shilluk:-

(i) According to tradition the *reth* may be strangled or suffocated by his wives if he fails to satisfy them, or shows signs of illness or senility, which may effect the welfare of the tribe. This is supported by tradition only.

1. See C. G. Seligman, *Egypt and Negro Africa*, p. 4.

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PART I.—DEATH AND BURIAL OF RETH FAFITI YOR.

643 *Reth* Fafiti Yor had been unwell for a month or two before September 1943, but custom did not permit him to acknowledge the fact, or tell people about it. The news of his illness became public early in September. He was being attended by a Shilluk medical assistant, but it was evident that his illness was becoming more serious and was not as simple as had been hoped. In the middle of the month the *reth* was visited by a British doctor, who diagnosed an internal obstruction, which might or might not be cancer. The *reth* did not wish to come to Malakal hospital, and the doctor saw no good reason to persuade him. He decided that he should stay under observation for a month. Some days later news began to come in that his condition was much worse; and in the afternoon of the 21st a message arrived in Malakal that the *reth* was unlikely to last the night. In fact, by the time the message arrived the *reth* was dead.

[195] *Piny lagga*—"There is no land—the Shilluk country has ceased to be."

766 The day after the *reth* died he was laid in state in the house in Fashoda where he had passed away. The body lay on a mattress on its right side shrouded in white cloth. Some eight or nine women [237 283] were fanning the corpse with fans made from the wings of wild geese. The women were the daughters of the *reth* and the daughters of *nai* Fadiet. None of the *reth's* wives were there. Two small gourds of [644] water were placed by the knees of the body. The part of the house in which the body lay was screened off by grass mats made by the *reth's* wives some three feet high, and above the mat was a curtain of white cloth, which was drawn aside for people as they paid their last respects. There were no signs of mourning or wailing in Fashoda.

The next night the body of the *reth* was carried secretly to Golbainy five miles north of Fashoda, where it was at once buried in the *reth's* private village in the house of his senior wife. It is traditional for the *reth's* body to be sealed into a Shilluk house near Fashoda and not buried for a year after his death. *Reth* Fafiti on his deathbed expressed

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(P.P.H.)

The funeral dance of the late *reth* was held in his private village on 7th, 8th, 9th of November, 46 days after his death. The dance is known as *wows* in Shilluk, and is different from that held for other members of the tribe, which is called *ywok*.

All arrangements are in the hands of the *kwareth*, and Colo chiefs have no say in the matter at all. At the outset there was considerable argument among the *kwareth* over the form of the dance and the length of time it should last. The new *reth* and the family of Fafiti took one side and some of the *kwareth* chiefs the other. This argument affords an interesting example of how the form of Shilluk tradition becomes blurred from lack of use and the attention which is paid to past precedents. It is worth noting in this context that the dance held in 1913 for *reth* Fadiet lasted for two days only in his private village (*i.e.* the village where he had lived before he succeeded to the throne), and that he had held no dance at all for his predecessor *reth* Kur, no doubt owing to the circumstances attending the end of Kur's reign. This neglect on the part of Fadiet so angered his successor Fafiti, that he hurled the royal drums into the Nile, refusing to beat them for Fadiet, who had not fulfilled his traditional obligations to Kur, and held the dance with Fadiet's own drums. Therefore the dance of Fafiti had to be held with his own drums, for the traditional royal drums no longer exist (Note 5). The *reth* and Fafiti's family maintained that the proper period for a royal funeral dance was four days in the private village of the late *reth*. Other *kwareth* said that it should be two days only in the village of the late *reth* followed by an optional dance in Fashoda lasting four days at the discretion of the *reth*-elect. It should be noted, however, that this claim goes back to events several generations ago, for no dance was held at Fashoda either for Kur or Fadiet and probably not for their predecessors, who died unnatural deaths during the Turkish administration and the Mahdia. The new *reth* declared his intention of holding a dance of four days at Fashoda after the ceremonies at Pareth Fafiti, but at the last minute the counsel of the *kwareth* must have prevailed, for the

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182 766 dance at Pareth Fafiti lasted three days only, and no dance was held at Fashoda at all.

[614] 766 The duties of organising the dance and of beating the drums fall to a clan called Kwanyikir, the majority of whom live in the vicinity of Kodok. They are responsible for discipline among the dancers, and in particular for keeping unauthorised persons out of the sacred spots. About two hundred and fifty bulls were slaughtered for the occasion, fifty of which were provided by the family of Fafiti and the rest by well-wishers, who included a number of Arab merchants. The distribution of meat was arranged by Kwanyireth Kir, chief of Fadiang, who is chief of all the *kwareth*. As he is senile, blind and deaf, he was assisted by Kwanyireth Bol, chief of Lul and government court chief of the Fashoda division for the portion of Gol Nyikang.

643 776 The new *reth* has no special functions to perform, and it was noticeable how careful he was to keep himself in the background. He never appeared in public while the dances were in progress, and though he attended on all three days he always went straight to his hut on arrival, and remained there during the day, and until he was ready to return [644] to Fashoda. It was obvious that the proceedings concerned the late *reth* alone, and it was his son Byawelo Fafiti who acted as host.

631 766 We had hoped that the form in which the contingents of dancers came in would throw some light on the traditional grouping of Shilluk sections and former political organization. We had been told by the *reth* that all sections in the three divisions of Fashoda, Gelhainy, and Detwok would be represented, and no one else. In fact a contingent also came from the Athodwoi division from north of Detwok. As far as could be seen the size of the contingents corresponded with the poll tax lists, and from those contingents who did come, very few warriors could have been missing. In the confusion of the dance it was not easy to see how the sections grouped themselves, but we got the impression that the Gelhainy division split up into what in government terminology are called "sections," but which tribally are more like the other divisions which participated. For example the sections

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of the Detwok division came together, and so did all sections of Fashoda division, but the component sections of the Golbainy division split and formed separate contingents. It is probable that there is no deep tradition behind this, but that grouping is largely governed by what is considered a suitable size for a contingent. Lemmo is a small section and could not produce a contingent of its own, so it joined up with Kodok its larger neighbour. It is not clear whether the sections of Shilluk society have any definite traditional function to perform at the funeral wake of a *reth*. The *reth* had orginally planned that the four days of dancing should be apportioned as follows :-- 631 766

1. Fashoda 2. Golbainy 3. Detwok 4. Fashoda (again)

This arrangement was carried out on the first day, and the dancing confined to Fashoda division, but Nyigir turned up and were regarded as intruders. Next morning, however, everyone else appeared, and the decision was taken to cut the dance to two days only. 766

The late *reth's* mother (Note 3) was a Nuba woman from near Fungur, which is on the western boundaries of Shilluk country. Some of her relatives arrived on the second day of the ceremony. Naturally they played no significant part, but it is interesting that they should have come at all. 644 648 603

Layout of the village Pareth Fafiti

Pareth Fafiti, also called Abwogatho, "fear of death", the village which the late *reth* built for himself, (Note 4) is of medium size and of the usual Shilluk type. There are three cattle byres built round an open space, which is about 70 yards in diameter. The houses are built round the outside of this open space and five of these, in which the wives of the late *reth* reside, had been repaired and the fences round them renewed. The tomb of the late *reth* is the house where [illegible] homestead except for the eight cross bands on the fence and a stockade of withies outside, which was built after the late *reth's* burial. This 361 766 778

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contingents of Fashoda began to come in and marched around the outskirts of the village. The various performances carried out by each group did not vary to any appreciable extent except perhaps in the order. The main events recorded were :-

The warriors, (Note 6) with shields, spears and sticks, entered the arena regimented with remarkable discipline into their sections. They first marched round the outside of the village, sometimes kneeling down as a body and beating their shields with their spears. They then moved in procession round the drums, turned to face them and danced with a jumping motion in a circle round them, with their spears raised. They then turned to the tomb of the late *reth* and, mingling with the women who were standing outside and singing the songs of Fafiti, knelt in homage towards him, sometimes beating their shields and clapping hands in time to the drums. The word *wee*, the traditional form of opening a conversation with the *reth*, was repeated by all at certain points in the song. They then arose and advanced round the village, once more visiting the houses of the late *reth* in turn, some of them peering inside the doors as if seeking for him. They then marched outside the village, and another contingent of warriors entered to take their turn.

Twice during the day, there was a spontaneous panic, and the crowds fled shrieking from the village. The explanation given was that the spirit of the late *reth* had been brought back by Nyikang and was now in their midst. Hands were clapped to drive the spirit away. The attitude of the Shilluk to this supposed phenomenon is important. There is no doubt that they were seized with fear, and fled as if the devil were behind them, but it was also regarded as a joke, and they all laughed heartily immediately afterwards. This mixture of fear and laughter is also characteristic of their flight from the effigy of Duk, which is described later. The panic was not started by any particular signal except that on both occasions someone heard some-body say "Nyikang has appeared."

The ceremonial dancing performed by the warriors and others, and the panic at the arrival of the departed spirit were repeated without

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The electoral college, in whom rests the responsibility for electing a new *reth*, is a very conscious survival of the traditional structure of the Shilluk tribe, and we believe it to be composed of those who are the descendants of the men who were, at any rate traditionally, the lords-lieutenant of the various counties into which Nyikang divided his kingdom, with the inclusion of three representatives from the large royal clan. 643 666 [174]

Shilluk society is divided into four main classes, the Kwareth, Colo, Ororo, and Bang Reth, two of whom the Kwareth and Colo together represent by far the greater part of the tribe and together provide the electoral college. The Ororo and Bang Reth have very important ceremonial functions in the installing of the *reth*, but no say in his election. As has been explained in the introduction the Kwareth "class" are really an extended clan, they are the descendants of the royal house, and they all trace their ancestry back to a *nyireth* and through him and his father directly back to Nyikang. The Colo are the mass of the Shilluk people divided into many clans, who may trace their origin to a family ancestor who "came with Nyikang" to what is now Shilluk country, or claim to be pre-Shilluk inhabitants of the country, or some of those non-Shilluk accretions, which Nyikang collected to him as he pursued his conquests. 565 666 [644 644]

Nyikang settled the west bank of the White Nile, from "Tonga to Mwomo," (the traditional boundary in the north is Moro some four miles north of the river port at Kaka, and in the south at Fajoje about ten miles upstream of Tonga). As he went he parcelled out the country among his followers, and made eleven of them chiefs[10] of the first degree, answerable to him and looking to him for their appointment and authority. When the organisation became complete the lords of the marches of Tonga and Mwomo became even more important than the others by virtue of their duties in connexion with the defence of the Shilluk boundaries, and their distance from Fashoda. But although these two were the most important on the executive side of 173 631

10. They were all Colo. Kwareth, who are descended from sons of reths, did not, of course, exist in Nyikang's day, for he was the first reth.

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643 sible, for only the settlement chief can call up the necessary force of
669 warriors. Equally an insurrection must centre round a *nyiretk*, for
[623] only *nyiretks* are eligible to become *retks*. (It is for this reason that Shilluk custom enjoins upon all *nyiretks* to remain quietly at home, as a safeguard, during an interregnum.) The procedure then varies with the fortunes of war. It seems probable that one settlement—there are some 100 settlements in the Shilluk country—would not of itself be able to start openly a campaign of violence. Should the electoral college fail to agree upon a single choice, then there would be a good chance of a pretender rallying half the kingdom to his cause, as Cuti Ajang succeeded in doing in 1917.

643 When the electoral college has settled upon a choice, the initial formalities take place very quietly, as if to avoid attracting attention. The new *retk* (who will not be *retk* in full sense till Nyikang has installed him) is brought by the chief of Gol Nyikang, traditionally after a mock duel, though we doubt whether this is obligatory. He is brought stealthily and by night, and at early dawn a bull is speared at Fashoda, and he is taken into the house favoured by his father in his life time in Fashoda, where he has to step over a sheep, held prostrate at the entrance to the house, and has a string of beads tied on to his ankle. The spearing of the bull and the tying on of the beads both symbolize his new status of what we may call *retk*-elect. We think the spearing of the bull is the more significant.

It is interesting that on this first day Anei was obviously under the stress of great emotion, natural in one who overnight, finds himself translated into the incarnation of the tribal hero, who is so closely descended from God.

631 Immediately on being introduced to Fashoda the *retk*-elect starts
CVD to receive the homage, unofficially and without ceremony, of the chiefs of his kingdom. They come from all parts of the country, and for a chief to fail to come would be a sign of disaffection, or at best gross discourtesy. The *retk's* brothers too all come, or should come, to
643 pay homage, and other *nyiretks* as well. His brothers appear to bear
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him no malice, though his election has practically taken away their chances of becoming *reth* in future. All the same there remains potential danger to the new *reth*-elect from an angry or ambitious *nyireth* trying to ambush him by night. No armed rising is now likely, but an individual challenge remains a possibility for the *reth* till the end of his days.

The initial ceremonies are simple, and soon over. There remains an interval for the *reth*-elect, until he is installed by Nyikang. The funeral obsequies of his predecessor are largely arranged by others, though he has a say in fixing dates and procedure.

A final word may be said upon the part played by the intervention of government in this and previous elections. As explained above elections have taken place in 1903 and 1917 in the time of the present government, and before that there was a period of uncertainty, sometimes amounting to civil war during the Mahdia and "Turkia". There is what might be called a "traditional" tendency towards civil war at the time of the election of a *reth*, which is the customary way out of an impasse caused by the disagreement of the two "kingmakers". Since the advent of the present government steps have been taken to get the *reth* elected by peaceful means, in spite of the disagreement.

In 1903 the governor at Kodok himself presided at the election, and more or less dictated the choice of Fadiet as *reth* in place of Kur. Kur had appeared somewhat too oriental in his methods, and it was thought that Fadiet would be more amenable as a government nominee. This proved to be the case, but the fact that he was nominated by government made him of little political importance in the tribe.

In 1917 a disagreement between the king-makers threatened civil war, and the governor had to instal Fafiti and protect him by a detachment of troops. This again detracted from his importance as tribal head.

In 1943 the kingmakers reached agreement, and government

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rope, a pledge of a bull for Nyikang and his people, and then produced an old blackened spear from his house, of unusual type among the Shilluk. After a show of reluctance he accepted a new spear. He later explained that the show of reluctance was due to the fact that the new spear was not an exact replica of the original. We were shown several spears which had been presented at previous installations, and then one was brought out which was the "original." But an old woman sitting by said "Nonsense, that is the one Nyikang presented when *reth* Yor was installed." 643

After the spear had been presented, the procession moved off to Nyigir. As before, on leaving Golbainy the people of Golbainy left the procession and their places were taken by the people of Nyigir, who grew in number as Nyikang reached the village of Adodo in Nyigir, where he was to stay till the installation

Nyikang, led by Dak, approached Adodo from the back and drew up outside the village while their following sang songs. Then a sheep was brought and tied in the middle of the village by the legs. Nyikang and Dak stepped over it, and Nyikang danced over to the house prepared for him and went in. Dak stayed outside for some time, dancing around, faster and faster, charging people who got in his way, until finally he too disappeared into the house. 643 778 [533 535]

THE RETH'S FLIGHT TO DEBALO

(P.P.H.)

The march of Nyikang from Akurwa to Nyigir was ended. He and Dak surrounded by the Kwanyikwom and other followers were safely installed in the village of Adodo. They would take their rest there for three days. 643

Meanwhile the *reth* had anxiously awaited their arrival but had not moved from the confines of Fashoda. In the early hours of the morning after Nyikang had reached Adodo, the *reth* secretly moved to Debalo which is a few miles south of the capital. He was accompanied [644]

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643 [647] by a number of his wives carrying his personal luggage and his food, and with him also were some of his personal bodyguard. During his three days seclusion at Debalo, the *reth* is said to be in especial danger of attack by his rivals, and extra precautions are taken for his safety.

[372] We were told—but did not see at close quarters—that fires are ceremonially lit and that fire-sticks were used for this purpose. There are three possible explanations of this; that the fire is lit as a ritual act and as part of the initiation of the *reth*; the Shilluk expression *pic mac* suggests some form of symbolic purification or initiation, for it is an expression used in that context by other Nilotics; that fires were lit round the confines of the village as an added precaution against marauders; or merely numerous fires lit to cook the meat of sacrifice. [114] Both the latter explanations are suggested by Munro in his account of the installation of *reth* Fafiti in 1917.

Whether the lighting of fires was a precautionary measure of security, a ritual act, or merely for purposes of feasting, the measures taken to safeguard the *reth* were manifest in other ways. A special homestead had been built for his reception in fine style with the eight cross-ties which are a symbol of royalty. It was situated in a particularly ostentatious position in the village of Debalo. But the *reth* did not occupy it. Instead, in order to deceive his enemies, he took up residence in a very ramshackle hut, which had no embellishments whatever.

643 776 The *reth's* stay at Debalo is not truly a period of seclusion. He has removed himself from all possible contact with Nyikang or his followers from the northern division of Gol Dhiang, but holds court among his own supporters, who flock in to pay homage from the division of Gol Nyikang. As yet we have formed no definite conclusions as to why the *reth* moves so hurriedly to Debalo as soon as Nyikang reaches Nyigir. Shilluk say that the *reth* has "fled" from Nyikang, and that he sends messengers to Nyikang beseeching him to stay away. It may be that this is considered a suitable sign of humility in accepting the office of *reth* of the Shilluk. Nyikang's attitude of arrogant

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resentment at the new *reth's* presumption in occupying Fashoda at all becomes apparent later in the ceremonies. It is possible that Nyikang is believed to resent the unwarranted seizure of his powers by a person who may be unworthy of the trust. This complex attitude is one of the main problems of the installation, for it is undoubtedly an attitude which conditions the behaviour of the *reth* later in the ceremonies, and is the object of the two battles fought out by the opposing armies.

Meanwhile further preparations for the final ceremonies were being made. The small grass huts called *adul*, which form the temporary camp outside the shrine of Nyikang at Fashoda, were built by the chief of Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang. This camp is used at a later period in the installation ceremonies, but it had to be built previously by these chiefs who are traditionally responsible for its erection. It is not built by orders of the chiefs to their own followers, though the latter bring in the materials, but with their own hands.

On the evening of the last day at Fashoda a procession arrived from Lul and passed through Debalo. This was the party responsible for bringing the spear of Nyikang and with it the sacred beads, which are said to have been part of the bride-wealth of Adwai, daughter of Nyikang, who married a man from the Nuba Mountains. The beads came from the shrine of Nyikang at Ocoro in Lul, and were guarded by the oldest and largest of Nyikang's spears, which was, like all really sacred objects among the Shilluk, wrapped in white cloth. They were carried on the head of a *nyireth* (a daughter of a *reth*) specially appointed for the purpose. They are said to be red and green, cylindrical and about half an inch long, but we were not allowed to see them. According to tradition, the *nyireth* and one of the *bang reth* hold a vigil by night over the beads in one of the huts called Araic on the sacred mound *Ajurwic*. If one of the beads presents itself with a hole through it, the phenomenon is considered a good omen, and next morning it is threaded and tied to the *reth's* ankle. If no hole is found the omen is bad, but the bead is tied to the *reth's* ankle all the same. This ritual takes place the night after the installation of the new *reth* on the sacred stool of the Shilluk, but it takes place in strict secrecy.

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reth had left his house, when they drew up on the north side of the village to take over the heifer which traditionally they must lead backwards from Debalo to Fashoda. This heifer, a brown one, had been brought into the village previously, and was already tethered in the centre. The Kwa Ojul, however, had brought with them the sheep over which the *reth* must step at Khor Arepejur. 643

Meanwhile the *reth's* body-guard and the Ororo were clustering round the entrance to the *reth's* hut. It was difficult to see any definite formation of clans at this point, and there was some confusion about positions, but the Kwa Okelo, and with them *Nya kwer*, who was completely surrounded by women, were in the centre of the village. Jago Yolsiker Ajang, the chief of Gol Nyikang, was much in evidence and dressed in a Mrs. Gray antelope skin (Note 8), and it was presumably his traditional duty to get the assembly into some order. [644]

From out of the *reth's* compound there first came his women attendants who had accompanied him from Fashoda and carried with them cooking materials and food in baskets (Note 9). Immediately after this the assembly drew up in roughly semi-circular formation facing the *reth's* hut and began to clap and sing in honour of the *reth*. The *reth* then appeared at the door of the homestead, and, stepping over a white sheep which had been pegged down in front of him, he stood with his back to the fence facing the multitude. The spear, wrapped in white cloth, and which together with the beads of Ocoro is collectively known as Nyikang was brought out and held beside him. After much singing and acclamation the *reth* moved forward and, heavily guarded by the Ororo, took up his position in the centre of the village. The procession was then ready to start. Kwa Ojul, who never came into the centre of the village, began to drag the heifer backwards at the front of the procession, but abandoned the attempt lower down the slope. Thenceforth it was led in the normal way, but scarcely visible for the crowds who surrounded it. The party then moved off in the direction of Fashoda, and a white bull, which had been tethered in the centre of the village alongside the heifer already mentioned. [644] [778]

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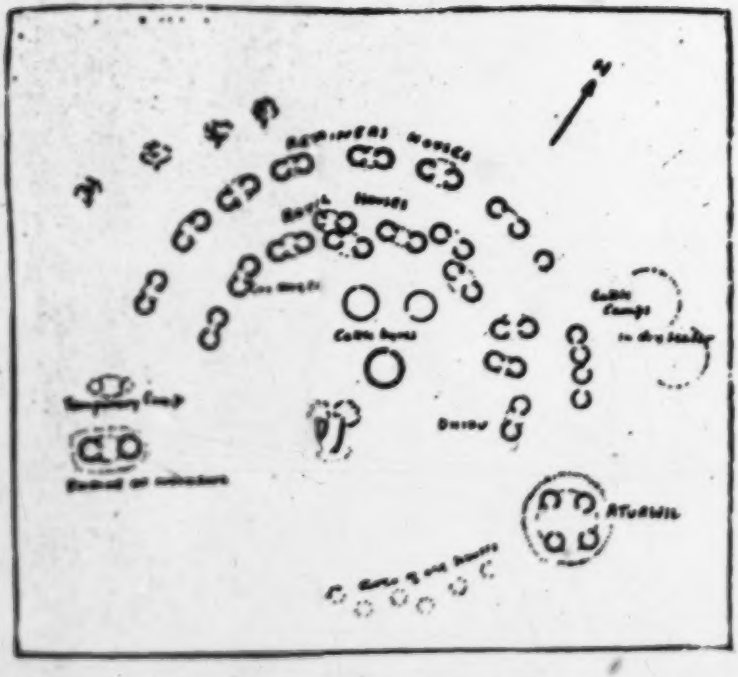

Sketch plan of Fashoda

[Facing p. 66]

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643 of fire ceremonially at Debalo has already been mentioned. This ceremony completed the first day. Nothing further occurred, though members of the Kwar Nyikwom danced and sang during the night, and sporadic drumming could be heard until the early hours of the morning.

INTERVAL.

During the two days after the *reth's* formal installation on the sacred stool no public ceremonies occurred. The *reth*, still in strict seclusion, moved only at night, and the rites enacted were conducted in secrecy. To the bulk of the people his whereabouts remained unknown. It appears that he spent one night in Adul (11th—12th March) and that the ceremony of tying on the sacred bead of Acoro took place on the morning of the 12th March. It was not possible [124] to witness any of these rites, and inquiries were met with evasion. An air of reticence and mystery veiled the scene. On the evening of the 12th and after dark, the *reth* went up into the mound Aturwic, and it is said he was enticed away by a woman of the Ororo (*nyaroro*), leaving behind him *nyakwer*, the girl of Kwa Okel who had accompanied him from Debalo. During the night of 13th-14th the *reth* visited Dhidu, a house which is below the mound of Aturwic and nearest of all houses to it. This visit must also remain a mystery. Answers [124] were evasive and probably deliberately misleading, though some informants said it was the house occupied by the Ororo girl.

THE FOURTH DAY.

643 The ceremonies of the fourth day centre round the person of
644 *nyakwer* and emphasise the continued opposition between Nyikang and the *reth*-elect. *Nyakwer*, "the girl of the ceremonies", who is provided for the occasion by the Kwa Okel, and who accompanied the *reth* from Debalo, had entered the temporary camp Adul with the *reth*. Thus far her status and the part she plays in the ceremonies had remained obscure. It was not clear whether she could be regarded

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as the wife of the *reth* or not. The answer depended on the cattle which had been handed over to the Kwa Okel by the *reth*, and whether they are considered bride-wealth or merely a reward for her services, in the same way as the sheep and cattle given to other expert functionaries who assist. The Shilluk say that the girl does not remain the wife of the *reth* and is handed to some favoured subject after the ceremonies are over. Up to this period in the ceremonies it was therefore problematical to us whether she is regarded as wife at all. The world *kwer* means literally "ceremony or ritual", and the girl is sometimes called *nyaroiny*, *roiny* being the term used for the induction ceremonies. This gives no clue to her status, but points to the ritual nature of her functions. The ceremonial acting of the fourth day, however, makes it quite clear that the cattle are indeed bride-wealth, and that she is regarded as the *reth's* wife, at any rate for the duration of the ceremonies. 643 644.

According to tradition, *nyikwer*, remains with the *reth* in seclusion in the temporary camp outside Fashoda until the second night, when he is enticed away by a girl of the Ororo, who induces him to follow her up into the mound called Aturwic. *Nyikwer*, neglected and forgotten, is left in the temporary camp, until Nyikang steals out from his shrine and carries her off with him. Only on the morning of the fourth day does the *reth* notice her absence and call for an explanation. The chief of the Kwa Okel, "the father of the girl", is summoned by the chief of Gol Dhiang, and is questioned by the *reth*. He denies all knowledge of her whereabouts. "Why do you not know?" demands the *reth*, "Have I not married her with cattle which are now in your possession? Go, bring her back to me." The chief of Kwa Okel goes off in search of her, but returns shortly afterwards to say that he has heard that Nyikang has seized her. He is ordered by the *reth* to fetch her, and goes off to request her return from Nyikang, using the *jago* of the Kwa Nyikwom as an intermediary. "Whose cattle are these?" says Nyikang, "Are they the *reth's* or are they mine?" (Note 19). The *jago* of Kwa Okel returns to the *reth*

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with news of Nyikang's refusal, but is again sent to fetch her, this time accompanied by the chief of the Gol Nyikang. On their repeating the *reth*'s demand Nyikang falls into a fury of rage and cries out that he will punish this presumptuous young upstart, who lays such outrageous demands on his property. Immediately he calls for his drummers, who beat out a tattoo summoning his warriors to war. The two envoys of the *reth* return to warn him of Nyikang's anger, and once more the two armies prepare for battle.

This is the traditional explanation of the cause of the second battle, and the tradition was faithfully enacted. Early that morning Jago Ajang of the Kwa Okel was summoned to Aturwic and was seen later searching for *nyakwer*. After talking with the Kwa Nyikwom outside the shrine he went back to Aturwic and returned accompanied by Jago Yor Leiker, the chief of Gol Nyikang. Together they entered the shrine, but hurried out almost immediately, and the drums of Nyikang began to beat. The Kwa Nyikwom and other followers of Nyikang, both male and female, clustered round the shrine, and the drummers continued to beat the drums either seated inside the withy fence, which surrounds the shrine, or walking round the whole building. An ox-hide was laid in the open space between the shrines and the temporary huts, and the drums placed thereon. Nyikang's followers began to dance and sing, the words of the song indicating that Nyikang was angered, and that the *reth* should appease him. The dance continued for some time, the dancers working themselves into a frenzy of excitement, leaping high into the air with arms stretched above them. Suddenly Nyikang and Dak appeared at the entrance of the shrine, and the army began to collect round them. Led by Dak they encircled the shrine three times, and then marched off to the hut known as *gol onger*, where the ropes of Dak and the whips are kept. The Kwa Nyikwom armed themselves with these and moved forward towards the mound, with Dak and Nyikang at their head. At this point another effigy appeared, a smaller one with grey (female) ostrich-feathers for the head and a slim body of twined rope. This was Cal another son of Nyikang. (Note 20).

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SPEECH DAY.

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643
411
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1.—Each chief, after making his speech, sticks a spear into the ground before the rest as a sign of homage.

2.—The rest's party below Atarwic, with the spears and shield of Nyikang. The drummer in front is beating a tattoo as a sign of appreciation of the speech just delivered.

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643 their return journey to Akurwa some weeks later. The *reth* himself remained up on the mound, while the crowds dispersed to their homes or sat about drinking and chatting round the houses of Fashoda.

(W.P.G.T.)

The final ceremonies on 15th. March consisted of a general assembly of all important chiefs and elders from all over the Shilluk country. Speeches were made, mostly of exhortation. The *reth* was confirmed [693] as supreme judge of the Shilluk people; and finally he was ceremonially shown round Fashoda by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang stopping at each house in turn.

[202] The scene was laid in the open space south of Aturwic, and all the chiefs had been summoned by drum in the early morning. At [778] the bottom of the mound we noticed the *kwom* (sacred stool), draped in white cloth as before; two spears, one wrapped in cloth, were held by bearers, one on each side of the *kwom*, and a small kettle-drum shaped like a basin, the property of the Kwa Wung who live mostly round Detwok, was set on the ground close by with its drummer. The lancebearers and the drummer were all from Kwa Wung.

Facing this stage were the assembled chiefs and elders of the Shilluk, with no conspicuous absentees, each one sitting down holding a spear. There was a clear space of some ten yards between the *kwom* and the chiefs.

In front of the entrance to the huts on Aturwic there was a sheep held tethered. Shortly the *reth* emerged from the huts followed by a group of women, wives and sisters: he and his important entourage were dressed in white with Mrs. Gray skins over the garments.

After stepping over the tethered sheep, the *reth* was led down [344] the slope by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang. His retainers followed him, and most of them stepped over the sheep too; when he reached [345] the bottom of the slope he was lifted on to the sacred stool, and sat facing the chiefs with his retainers grouped behind him: immediately

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behind him was a bearer carrying a fan made from both wings of the Saddle-billed stork joined in the middle like the letter W. He was wearing a silver bracelet on each wrist, and came down from the mound carrying two spears, each head downwards. After being seated on the stool, these spears were taken back by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang to Aturwic. A big white bull was then brought by the Ororo and tied to a stake north of the assembly.

Then the chiefs came forward one by one carrying a spear, head downwards: sometimes two got up together and a short argument arose, but the question was quickly settled by precedence. Some forty or fifty chiefs and elders each had their say in turn, and after each speech the spokesman thrust his spear into the ground: if his speech met with approval (not we think the approval of the *reth* but of the drummer) he was given a tattoo on the drum, and escorted part of the way back to his place by the drummer drumming. The distance he was escorted depended on the merit of his speech. One chief, of Bur Nyiliec, came with no spear, and instead he laid a small object, probably a bead, reverently on the ground.

Most of the speeches, each of which lasted between two and five minutes, were rather trite; the following is a resumé of the more common or interesting points:-

"Anei has been elected *reth* without dissentient voice; all the Shilluk from Mwomo up to Tonga want him as their *reth*."

"All classes of Shilluk society, *kwa reth*, *bang reth*, and *colo* recognise you, Anei, as *reth*, for there was no fight on your appointment."

"The *reth* is alone and has no favourites."

"Assist your chiefs and help them to keep order."

A somewhat discordant note was struck by the chief of Tonga: "our job is not to keep order; that is your job. Our duty is to supply you with choice morsels of hippo meat."

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537 An untraditional but common topic was: "The Government
631 needs no introduction, you and it must co-operate; it is not like the
643 Dervishes or Turkia; you must help to collect its taxes."

644 The speeches opened with Jago Yor Leiker, the chief of Gol Nyikang, and Jago Tabo, the chief of Gol Dhiang, and finished with the chiefs of the marches Jago Ongwany of Mwomo and Jago Ding of Tonga. Each chief stuck the spear into the ground before the *reth* when his speech was ended, so that there remained a veritable forest of spears in front of the *reth* after the speech-making was over.

After Jago Ding's speech there was a short silence, after which the company started a chant to Nyikang and the *reth*. Then the *reth* got up and addressed his people, for now for the first time he was truly installed on the stool of Nyikang, and was fully become *reth*. "I have become your *reth*", he said, "and I will rule you and justify those who are aggrieved."

643 The assembly then arose, and the *reth* moved over to where the
702 white bull was tied. He made passes over its back with a spear, and retired. The Ororo came up, and after an abortive attempt which bent the spear, they stabbed the bull. The spears stuck in the ground were taken, some by Jago Yor Leiker, some by the men of Akwobai, who had gone to Kosti; and some by Kwa Wung.

643 After this came the final ceremony. The *reth*, accompanied
644 by a few chosen followers, was introduced to each house in Fashoda by the chief of Kwa Nyikang. There are many sites in the south east side of Fashoda where there used, in the days of *reth* Fadiet, to be houses, but Fashoda is smaller now. Tradition is strong however, and the *reth* was solemnly introduced to those sites, and told their names, and whose responsibility it was to rebuild them. When he came to the favourite house of his father *reth* Kur, a sheep was brought and prostrated before the door. The *reth* stepped over it and passed into the house, and the installation ceremonies were ended.

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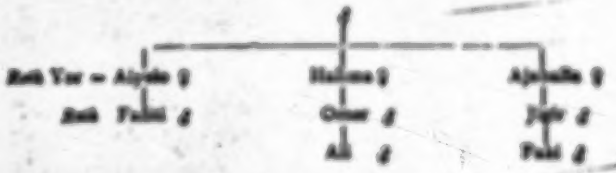
Note to Introduction.

1. Sir Samuel Baker. *Ismailia* p. 102.

Notes to Part I

3. The relationship of the two most important men among the late *reth*'s maternal relatives is recorded below:—



Ali and Fadi, descendants of Fadiet's mother's sisters, were present.

The Nuba of the Fungor area have considerable traditional connection with the Shilluk. The bamboos for Nyikang's body are brought from here, and gifts are exchanged between the *reth* and the local Nuba chief, whom we met at Fashoda some time after the installation when he was being invested with the insignia of a Shilluk chief.

4. *Reth* Faditi was brought up in a village in Kodok section, but after 1917 the supporters of Coti Ajang were too numerous for comfort in Kodok section, and Faditi, in fear of assassination, moved his village to Golbainy and called it Abogathow "fear of death."

5. The royal Shilluk drums had special houses built for them in Fashoda, and special custodians appointed for them. These drums no longer exist. Shilluk say that *reth* Faditi, angered because *reth* Fadiet had held no funeral dance for *reth* Kwa buried the royal drums into the Nile, and held the dance for *reth* Fadiet with Fadiet's own drums. For the funeral dance of a *reth* (*wowo*) the drums are stood up on end in shallow holes prepared in the ground, and beaten with newly cut sticks of the *Anglig* tree. For other funeral dances, the drums are mounted horizontally upon forked sticks.

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of his throne, the spirit of the divine Nyikang, which had been as it were in suspension since the last *reth* Anei Kur had passed over a year ago, had entered into Dak Fadiet, and once again the Shilluk people could resume their normal life.

NOTES.

1. *The body of Nyikang.*

It was explained in our previous article that the body of Nyikang consisted of a bundle of bamboos brought from the Nuba Mountains. I now believe that this is not the case and that only Dak's body is of bamboo. It is more likely that the bundle is of ambatch, indeed this is generally believed. The Shilluk believe that the soul of a mortal can pass into a stick of ambatch, and I am informed by Dr. J. A. Hissety that if a Shilluk dies away from his home his relatives hold a ceremony to make his soul pass into a stick of ambatch, which they take back to his village and bury there.

2. *The regil of the Beads 'Ouro,' which are tied on to the reth's ankle.*

I interviewed the old *nyimak* who is responsible for these beads. She was reluctant to tell me much, and refused to show me the beads. I asked her, for she had great experience of these matters, how it came that some beads appeared with holes in them, and she told me that as she sat over them at night the ones which appear with holes went 'pop.' She told me that four had appeared with holes for *reth* Fadiet in 1918, and one for *reth* Anei and *five* for *reth* Dak. She said four or five were about right, one was too few, and more than five was too many. The beads with holes are tied on to the *reth*'s ankle only during the ceremonies, and after that they apparently close up.

3. *Nyakwer.*

It was not clear in 1946 what became of Nyakwer. It now appeared that she became *lawik*, i.e. will become a wife of the *reth* when she grows up. The girl who was Nyakwer in 1944 still lives in Fashoda, and is now about 13 years old. There was of course a different girl in 1946.

4. *Fashoda.*

The sacred village of Fashoda was most beautifully cleaned and repaired for the installation. All the houses had had their fences renewed, and courtyards replastered with mud, though none of them was rebuilt. The whole of the mound on which the royal shrine of

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Athudowic stands had been plastered with smooth mud from top to bottom.

8. *Fanyikang.*

As in 1944 the sacred shrine of Nyikang at Fanyikang was thrown down and rebuilt after the ceremonies.

766 Arrangements were made immediately to transport his body to Fashoda, where he should have died, and a steamer left early the next morning. From Fashoda he was carried to Debwor, a small village nearby which had been expressly made for this purpose and the unconditional manner of his passing does not seem to have caused much comment among the Shilluk themselves. The body was seen by Mr. J. L. Baker, District Commissioner of the Shilluk, on the morning of the 10th and he describes it as being shrouded in white cloth and fanned by his sisters with white goose feathers. There was, in fact, some delay in the preparation of the body, since his death had occurred away from the capital, but after some special ivory bangles had been fetched from Famadh, he was placed according to custom inside a hut in the village of Debwor. The body was laid on a specially constructed bier (*pum*)[1] a rectangular construction lined on the outside with fish-spears and covered with a white cloth. The hut was then sealed up and large numbers of Shilluk, mainly from nearby settlements, arrived to pay their homage in the traditional [643] manner. The obsequies were completed by the 12th May, and thereafter the electoral college met to elect the new *reth*, Kur *wad* Fadiet.

643 It is apparently the *reth*-elect who decides when the reburial and mourning ceremonies (*orero*) are to take place in close consultation with the ● 644 kinsmen of the late *reth*, for they are materially concerned, and also with 428 the *orero*[1] who are largely responsible for the funeral arrangements. In fact 766 there was some argument between the *reth*-elect and the immediate family of the late *reth*. The former insisted that all disputes over the inheritance of the royal cattle should be settled before the final mourning ceremonies should take place. During *reth* Dak's illness in hospital, his brother Col and his eldest son Adieng, had taken stealthy measures to hide some of the cattle which, by royal right, should pass to his successor and not to his personal heirs. 643 The decision was made in November and leads me to believe that the 766 prevailing consideration is that the final mourning ceremonies should always be completed by the next harvest, since the installation of the new *reth* should take place shortly after the crops have been gathered.[2]

The period between death and final burial therefore varies according to the time of year in which death takes place.

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[1] *pum*: Used only for members of the royal clan and for chiefs.

[767] [2] The *orero*, originally descended from *reth* Ocollo and separated from the royal house. They have special functions to perform at the burial ceremonies and installation of a *reth*. See Howell and Thomson, *idem*, p. 6, and Pumphrey, *The Shilluk Tribe*, pp. 12-14.

[3] On this subject see Howell and Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 127, *et seq.*, and Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

A[i.e., at Fashoda - Ausley?]

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The march of the armies and the march hands

After three nights in seclusion in Dolaja, during which his followers are removing from the south, the reth is challenged by Nyikang to come forth to fight and messengers are sent for this purpose. Accompanied by Nyakwer, "the girl of the ceremonies," who plays an important part in subsequent events, by various relics of Nyikang, by his shield and spear-bearers and his army, the reth marches on the capital, crossing Awongker on the way, and smashes the army of Nyikang by shots drawn up just west of Fashola. In this battle he is defeated, captured by Nyikang and carried off to the shrine of Nyikang (Ciwjiw) nearby.

The substitution on the sacred mound

In front of this shrine the sacred mound of Shilluk kings, the house, is set shrouded from the public by a canopy of white cloth. Nyikang is placed upon this, but after a time is whisked away and the reth takes his place. This act of substitution and enthronement, perhaps the most significant act of all the ceremonies, is the point where the reth is possessed by the spirit of Nyikang.

The temporary camp

Shortly after this the reth is carried to a temporary camp (*Alak*), where, after a sacrifice, he is washed and purified. He remains there in strict seclusion, guarded by the army.

The visit to Akwerc

On the next evening, he ascends into *Akwerc*,† the imposing mound which dominates the capital and on which are four well-built houses. It is said that he is carried there by a company of the army, having Nyakwer behind, kingsmen and neighbours. After two nights, word is brought to him that Nyikang has seized her on the grounds that she has been married with spoils from the royal herd; these are his, Nyikang's property, not that of a man who has not yet been confirmed in his position as reth.

The final struggle with Nyikang

Challenged, the reth comes down from the mound with his followers, while Nyikang comes forward to attack him right in the centre of Fashola. In a furious battle which follows, the reth succeeds in wresting Nyakwer from Nyikang and enters into *Akwerc* once more. Shortly afterwards, Nyikang ascends the mound and makes his peace with the reth and then follows a ceremonial inspection of the houses of the capital and fines are imposed on those chiefs who have not fulfilled their obligation to repair them. The reth has now been accepted by Nyikang where official and public functions are over. Later he enters again to *Akwerc*.

Speech Day

On the final day, the chiefs of the country assemble below the mound and the reth, accompanied by his drummer and shield-bearer, comes down to meet them. Each chief in turn addresses the reth and, after declaring his allegiance, exhorts him to do his duty and to treat his people justly. The reth is then conducted again round the houses of Fashola over which he now has complete control.

In this brief summary, I have drawn attention only to the most important features of the installation. There is naturally a wealth of ritual carried out at each stage of the ceremonies. From the accounts of the accession of reth Fidhi in 1917, reth Anei in 1944 and reth Dak in 1946, we have a clear picture of the slow and colourful process by which a reth is chosen and installed. Each stage has its religious and secular aspects and in the short description of the installation of reth Kur and Fidhi which follows, it will be

† Variously spelt: *Akwerc*, *Akwakwerc*, *Akwerc*.

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purpose. Secondly, it was clear that many persons from the southern Shilluk assumed that he would remain there for at least three nights before proceeding to Fashoda and were therefore too late to attend the ceremonies.

I reached Kwom, near Debaio, on the morning of the 6th February. At that early hour there was little activity, though many of the *reth*'s followers were to be seen clustered round Debaio. There followed the usual delay while *Awa Ojal*, the clan whose duty it is to provide a heifer which is led backwards in front of the *reth* as he leaves for Fashoda,* were still arguing about the number of spears and other articles they should receive as their reward; *Awa Okula* who provide *Nyakwer*, the "girl of the ceremonies," who accompanies the *reth* and plays such an important part in the installation, were also late. Finally, towards midday, all was ready. Messengers had arrived to say that Nyikang was on the move, and after stepping over the bull and the performance of the usual ritual associated with this occasion, the *reth* and his company set out for Fashoda. I watched the procession depart and as far as I could make out the formation of the bodyguard and the position of the clans was the same as in 1944, though a great deal less orderly in the initial stages of the journey. Since Mr. J. C. N. Donald (who had attended the installation of *reth* Anei and of *reth* Dak) and Mr. Udal were present, I decided to leave the *reth*'s party and to move northwards to follow the army of Nyikang. Mr. Udal has recorded the details of the *reth*'s march as follows:

"In fact it was not until nearly 12.30 p.m. that the procession finally set off to meet the forces of Nyikang. The *reth* appeared wearing a Mrs. Grey monkey skin surrounded by his family entourage including *Nyakwer*, his luggage carried on a carrier's head and the child-bearer carrying the small shield of Nyikang wrapped in white cloth. In addition to his own police in their scarlet *kaus*, the *reth* on his own initiative had arranged that the two Government police, stationed at Debaio for the occasion, should escort him and they accompanied him throughout the ceremonies. A bull was effectively cast for the *reth* to step over and with that the procession moved off at a brisk pace. There was no stop for refreshments at the merchant's shop at Kwom which had been honoured by *reth* Anei on his way to the installation in 1944. Nor until the *Ider Awopjur* was reached did the cavalcade, deployed in extended line, come to a halt.

"The time was now about 1 p.m. On the northern bank of the watercourse the forces of Nyikang could be seen drawn up in wide formation and the effigies stood out distinctly at some quarter of a mile's distance. Two messengers from Nyikang were waiting in the bed of the watercourse, and the black bull, over which the *reth* must step, was also in evidence. A brief conversation was held with Nyikang's messengers who then returned to their master. In the meantime singularly inadequate attempts were made to cast the black bull, which delayed the proceedings by eluding its captors and running away down *Ider Awopjur*, from which it was only recovered with difficulty. Finally it was well and truly cast, and the *reth*'s forces crossed the watercourse with much shouting and advanced to meet the forces of Nyikang."

* See Howell and Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-55.

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INSTALLATION OF A NEW SHILLUK KING

[The following account, by a Shilluk pupil at Rumbek Secondary School, originally appeared in the *Rumbek Magazine* for 1956, and is reprinted with the permission of the Ministry of Education. It is, so far as is known, the first written account of the ceremony by a member of the Shilluk people. The article has been read by Dr. P. P. Howell, who considered it to be of sufficient interest to warrant publication in *Sudan Notes and Records*.]

When the Reth of the Shilluk dies, all the senior chiefs of the thirteen divisions of the country are summoned to Fashoda, the chief reigning village (*pun duong*), by the District Commissioner and the Head Chief of Fashoda Division, to attend the election of the new Reth.

The new Reth is not to be elected from among the late Reth's sons, but from another branch of the Royal Family. In the election the elder son of a Reth and a left-handed Prince cannot be elected, according to traditional custom. A woman has no claim to the Rethship. It happened once in the past that there was one Queen called Abudhok who reigned in Fashoda, but from thenceforward no woman has held the Rethship.

As soon as the Nyireth (Prince) is elected Reth he is taken to Fashoda, where he remains quietly until the late Reth's wuaww (mourning dance) has been held. After this, the installation of the new Reth, or the coronation ceremony, follows. Before the coronation the people of Pathiang, north-west of Fashoda, are sent to the Nuba mountains to fetch some holy bamboos which are used in the coronation, and the blacksmiths of Gulhanyo at the northern side of Fashoda; and those of Nyinkango and Bieh in the south, are busy making the coronation spears. First comers from among the Nyikango's army (Kwanyikwom) pass to Obay in the southern part of the country to bring some palm leaves for making whips with which they beat people during the coronation. In Debalo Kwom there are some people carving ivories. The performers of the coronation tie some branches of them trees in front of their villages on the roads, being authorized by tradition to stop any man passing along that road without his giving an offering to them. The people of Tonga paddle far south in their canoes to Lake Nio to fetch the ambatch (*Aeschynomene elaphroxylon*).

After the accomplishment of all these things, the Reth is taken to Debalo Kwom south of Fashoda, a village where the coronation spear is kept. In Debalo there is a little herd of cattle from Pachow which the Reth looks after, and he is treated roughly like a small boy by the head chief of Debalo, before he takes his position as Reth. Nobody is allowed to go among these cows or to take any fire from among them. Any unfortunate fellow going near them is seized by Kwa Nyath and made to give something. These cows go together with the Reth to Fashoda where he looks after them again.

In this installation there are two rival armies, the army of the Reth and the army of Nyikango. Nyikango's army brings the images of Nyikango and Dak his son from Akurwa, a village in the northern part of the country. Without the power of Nyikango and Dak the new king cannot be crowned. When the party leaves Akurwa they have four resting places before they reach Fashoda. In the last, Adee Nyigir, two miles from Fashoda, they await the arrival of the Reth's army from Debalo.

* Nyikango was the founder of the Shilluk Kingdom. At his death he is said not to have been buried but to have disappeared in the sky.

25: Anonymous 1-5 (no date) 1956 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 When the Reth's army begins to move out to meet Nyikango's, all the people of Dehelo run away clapping the bundles of their spears, meaning that the Reth will never return to Dehelo until he dies. As he goes out a bull is laid down on his path, whereupon he walks over it in front of the procession, pulling another bull by the tail. The latter is covered with white cloths and is meant to reach Fashoda, being dragged in this manner—Fashoda is about two and a half miles from Dehelo. The spear from the shrine at Bol and another from Lul are also brought for the coronation ceremony.

Now spears are sent to see if Nyikango's army is approaching and to report the news back to the Reth. In the Reth's army the people carry some short stabbing-spears with which they fight with the army of Nyikango by throwing them. The members of Nyikango's army carry long clumps of twisted grass which they use as whips to disperse the Reth's army, so that they will leave the Reth in their hands to be taken by the spirit of Nyikango. The whips are filled with the spirit and the people are frightened by them, as being touched by the whip is enough to produce madness unless gifts are offered to Nyikango's people. Princes are not allowed to go near the Reth during the procession, because if the Reth is killed by any of them during the coronation procession from Dehelo to Fashoda the coronation is not performed, but the people at once raise a nearby Prince, or the prince who killed him, to replace the slain Nyimth—he is not yet Reth, as he has not been possessed by the spirit of Nyikango—and the coronation continues. Because of this danger during the procession the Reth has to be protected by his policemen and the senior chiefs, who keep the ordinary people away from him.

According to the custom, when the Reth's army reaches the dry khor called Acothojor near Fashoda, which is the boundary between the two parties, a black bull is laid down. The Reth boldly walks over the bull and across to the other side to meet the party of Nyikango. As soon as they come near each other the two armies begin to fight, throwing clubs at each other. At that moment the Reth is seized from his army by the people of Nyikango and clothed with the spirit of Nyikango. Here Nyikango's army are busy winding people away with their whips so as to leave the Reth with the group of performers of the ceremony. After this he is taken to a round cleared place and circumambulated four times there before entering Fashoda. At this is done he is escorted to Fashoda by two lady maidens with the image of Nyikango on his shoulder. These two maidens are taken from the performers of the coronation and later become wives to the new Reth.

In Fashoda he is taken in front of the Nyikango's shrine and placed on a silver coronation seat covered with white cloths, and the image of Nyikango and Dak are held over him in order that he might be possessed of their powers. With him are his sub-chief and the chief of Kwanyiyeth holding the legs of the Reth as he is sitting on the seat. He remains in an open place for some time, with the group holding some white cloths as a shelter around him. Meanwhile Nyikango's army beat their drums and sing Nyikango's songs. Here the Reth is said to be shaken by the power of Nyikango as he is being possessed by him.

643 After the performance of this, the Reth and his sub-chief are taken to one of 233 the roughly-made huts near Nyikango's shrine, where they stay for two days, with the Reth keeping the little herd of Nyikango's cattle which was brought from Dehelo. This kind of action is done so as to obtain good fortune in the future during his kingship. Here he is treated as he was in Dehelo, being made to do the work of a small boy, making fires for three times and cleaning their plates. This work is done

36: Pumphrey G-S (1934-1937)1937
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SHILLUK "ROYAL" LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS.

By M. E. C. Pumphrey.

THE Shilluk divide themselves with great distinctness into two divisions, namely "Royal Blood" (Shil., KWAR REETH) and "Shilluk" (Shil., COLLO). KWAR REETH includes, with the exception of a single distant branch called the "Otoro," all the living patrilineal descendants of the semi-mythical but historical Nyikang Okwa, who, in about 1500, is supposed to have led a party from the neighbourhood of Wau into the present Shilluk country.

Within the KWAR REETH there are three higher titles. These are *Reth*, for the reigning king; *Nyireth*, for the son of a king, reigning or dead; and *Nyareth* or *Nyinyireth*, for the son of a *Nyireth*. All other members of the KWAR REETH are entitled *Kwar Nyireth*, which is abridged into *Kwa'nyireth*. All KWAR REETH should be addressed by prefixing their title to their names or else by the use of their titles alone, an exception to this last being that you never address the Reth as *Reth* but use the appellation *Wau*.

The Shilluk say that they found the Fung in the present Shilluk country and that they drove them out northwards. Undoubtedly, however, many remained as an inferior caste, and there are still traces of a Kwar Fung (Fung clan). The remaining Fung, together with the apparently small band of Shilluk who accompanied Nyikang, pre-eminently form, with subsequent accretions, the ancestors of the COLLO. Nyikang and his sons are the ancestors of the KWAR REETH.

When using the Shilluk language it is important not only to use the proper title when addressing a member of the KWAR REETH but also to make certain deferential modifications in some words and expressions. Only some of these modifications are necessary when addressing a mere *Kwa'nyireth* (largely those of implying divine intervention in all works of mortals), but when addressing the Reth certain fictions have to be borne carefully in mind.

For example, the *Reth* and, less rigorously, District Commissioners and their assistants do not sleep. Strangely enough, they go out to graze (Shil., *kwai*). They never exist unaided. When not more specifically

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any ostrich they may meet will stand until they have plucked the requisite feathers. Further they are believed to produce Nyakang from the river by stabling a cow in sacrifice on the bank of the Nile).

When all was ready, Nyakang started on its journey with a large following and proceeded at a leisurely pace. The road is cleared for it from Kaka to Fashoda. It passed Kodok on 11th January 1918.

As Nyakang draws near, the selected Ret is supposed to go to Dabalu in Akwom and stay there for one night before the actual ceremony. In this specific instance Fafiti went to Akwom three days before the ceremony and was installed in Fashoda on the 4th morning. Different chiefs gave varying answers as to the number of nights which it was essential for the Ret to stay in Dabalu: it would appear however that the Ret really goes there when everything is nearly ready; but if for any reason some delay occurs, a day or two is considered immaterial, which is in accordance with all native Sudan custom. In the present instance I understand Ajang wad Amoith of Akwom, whose duty it was had neglected to give due notice to the Southern chiefs, and so Kwa Mal[1] only arrived on the 16th instead of two days earlier.

B. — NARRATIVE (JANUARY 17TH, 1918).

I arrived Fashoda about 7.30 a.m. While waiting I examined the shrine of Nyakang[2] from outside, and the temporary huts[3] built for the Ret.

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[1] Kwa (descendants of) Mal stated by Westermann, p. 118 to be founded by a man and woman, who came down from above. They left children on earth: their home is Malakal. They receive from the Ret the black bull over which the Ret steps before crossing the Khor; this is their reward for whipping on any that daily is following the Ret.

[2] The shrine of Nyakang consists of two well built circular mud huts with grass roofs surmounted by an ostrich egg and a spear blade. The whole is enclosed in a fence. The grey mud walls are painted in different coloured stripes with spots dotted on them as shown in Seligmann's illustration of Nyakang at Fashkang fig. 55. The guardian is an old ex-wife of the Ret; small children are also allowed to enter. No woman who is pregnant can enter the shrine. The guardian has a little hut apart.

[3] About 80 yards distant there is a practical miniature of the shrine, a temporary building completely made of grass especially erected for the Ret to live in after the installation prior to his going up to his real house on the mound.

27: Munro U-5 (1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

and also the official residence of the Ret[1]. About 11 a.m. loud drumming in the distance gave us the first intimation that *Nyakang* was en route from its shrine in *Nyagir* and was now approaching *Fashoda*. In the distance on the slight slope north of *Fashoda* a large company could be seen with *Nyakang* and *Dak*[2] borne aloft in the centre. Hundreds of Shilluk warriors were in attendance on *Nyakang* and its people. The men of *Golbaing* and *Nyagir* were acting as flank guards, and the whole array with the sun on its spears was most impressive. Once and again according to correct tradition *Nyakang* turned back and retraced its way to very near its starting point in *Nyagir*. This I understood to be indicative of *Nyakang's* uncertainty as to whether it would accept the new Ret and bestow on him its divine protection. The pauses and returns of the concourse became more frequent, but shorter in time and during them the warriors and maidens could be seen dancing. About this time a small band of four warriors sent by *Fofiti* appeared in *Fashoda* and proceeded to circle round it two or three times with the peculiar dancing stride of the Shilluks. This band was shortly increased to six in number, and finally took its stand on *Nyakang's* road. The blowing of a horn announced the appearance of the Ret's army from *Akwom*, a great crowd of warriors. They came on apace until near the small khor about a quarter of a mile south of *Fashoda* — they were chiefly from the Southern sections, although *Kodok* itself immediately surrounded the Ret. It was impossible to see *Fofiti* himself as yet owing to the crowd.

The small party of six above mentioned now plays its part as a post between the Ret and *Nyakang*. The messengers all run at full speed and appeared to be changed at the half way post. They are taking offers from the Ret to *Nyakang*. At first *Nyakang* refuses them, and turns back. Eventually

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[1] His house consists of four flat built huts enclosed in a fence. The western hut is known as *Do-Ret'*, and in it are kept the sacred stool, the spear, the sword and the shield. The Eastern hut is for the Ret's wives, and the other two are used for any thing the Ret likes. The stool etc. are brought out for the ceremony and relegated to *Do-Ret'* afterwards.

[2] *Dak* is the son of *Nyakang*: his effigy is much taller and thinner in body, but smaller in head than that of *Nyakang*. Both effigies are in charge of *Adur* son of *Abid Adong* of *Akwom*.

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he accepts, and we are informed that one cow, one bull and five spears have been offered and taken. Further I was told that the messengers carry straws symbolical of the above offers (the common practice of Shilluk accounting), but this I cannot vouch for, as we could not see it. When the amount has been fixed, Nyakang appeared to advance steadily and rapidly, only making one sharp rectangular turn in our direction, and as I understood that Nyakang's people could hold to ransom (in cows) any one whom they caught, I made a slight alteration in my position.

At this moment from the side some seventy or eighty of the Ret's wives came dancing towards Nyakang's army holding their hands out palm upwards and chanting *ye bin, ye bin* «come come».

The Ret's army now moves rapidly forward to the khor. I saw in front a small black bull, across which the Ret is said to step before crossing the khor. Tradition states it is important for the new Ret to cross this khor dryshod. As there was still water there, Fašši was taken across in his tarur (Shilluk boat), but owing to the crowd I could not see this. Just as the army gets to the khor, there is a sudden headlong flight by every one, due to the right possessed by the Kwo Hal of flogging any one that tarries or delays crossing the khor with the Ret. The Kwo Hal apparently used their whips with good effect, and soon the whole army was across. For this service Fašši gives the black bull to the Kwo Hal.

I could not distinguish Fašši, who in accordance with custom was clad in the ordinary Shilluk loo (cloth) and with a dingy red and yellow turban on his head. He was holding by his hand a tiny girl brought by the Kwo Okel[1]. In front of him came the people of Kwo Okel dragging forward a white bull tail first. The two armies then met. Nyakang and

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[1] Kwo Okel. Founded by people that Nyakang found in the Shilluk country. They help in building the house of Nyakang when a king is crowned. They give one of their daughters to the king. The girl is known as Nya Kwor (*i. e.* a girl of the authorities, girl of town).

They are sometimes identified with Kwo Kalo — a section founded by Okalo a servant of Nyakang who taught the Shilluks how to prepare the meal for the Tekki (kaoth cakes). Another tradition states that Okalo was a Nuba, whose sister was married by Nyakang (*cf.* Westermann, p. 109 *et seq.*, lists of clans made out by Rev. D. Ogilvie, of Doleib Hill).

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173 174 To the west and north was the desert inhabited by peoples greater and stronger than themselves and prepared to dispute their advance in that direction; on the east the Nile ran, and behind them were the swamplands, and Dimo. 131 361 They had no choice then but to stay in the country where they are found today, a narrow belt of land extending from Tonga in the south to Kaka in the north, a distance of about 150 miles. Inland Shilluk settlements may be found 15 miles away from the river, but generally their villages, containing from two to twenty or thirty families, stand no further than a mile or two from its banks, straggling along the whole length of the country. Since their first settling there some hardy souls have crossed the Nile and founded foothold on its eastern bank which they have gradually extended until they occupy a strip of land stretching from opposite Kodok in the north to the River Sobat in the south, and along that river for a distance of 30 miles or so. The nature of the country on the other side, however, does not differ from that of their original settlement, and the powerful Dinka tribe has always opposed their progress inland, so that those who have gone to live on the eastern bank are no better off than they were before.

565 The social structure of the Shilluk tribe is built up from a division of the people into four classes or castes. These classes are not however exclusive, for they live together in the same villages, share common tasks and recreations and even intermarry. The basis of the division is the possession of royal blood, or, ultimately, descent from Nyikang.

645 644 The first class is that of the Kwareh, the Royal Clan. To this belong all those who are members of the royal houses tracing their ancestry directly to Nyikang. Only a member of this class is eligible for election as king. The first four generations of a king's descendants are recognized as being of royal blood and are entitled to the privileges of royalty. [304 301 293 Thus they are permitted to retain all their teeth, they may wear an anklet of small white beads, and more than one according to the nearness of descent; they alone may dress in a leopard skin for a dance.

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in a leopard skin for a dance. Apart from these privileges, however, the son or grandson of a king is in no other way distinguished; he must undertake the menial tasks which fall to the lot of the boys of the village, the herding of the cows and sheep, the milking and the cleaning of the byre; he submits to the same ordeal of tattooing and cannot anticipate his initiation dance, the great coming-of-age celebration, by which he and others of his age-group formally become full members of the tribe. He is accorded a special respect, and if he is a Nyireth, a son of the king, is eligible for election to the high office of king of his people. The fifth generation of the king's descendants, though they are allowed to retain the title of Kwanyireth, descendants of the king, merge into the common people and are treated as such.

The second class is that of the Ororo, which holds a peculiar position in the social system. Its members are of royal blood, but are for ever debarred from election to the kingship. Shilluk history relates that of the fifth king, Ocalo, all the sons of his first wife were slain in battle with the Nuer, save one. This was a puny boy whom his father despised as unfit to be king. In his grief and rage at the loss of his sons, Ocalo threw the sacred spears of Nyikang into the river to signify that he considered his house at an end, since he had now no son worthy of succeeding him. The son who was left, Duad by name, upbraided his father fiercely, and swore that if ever he became king he would disinherit and degrade the other children of Ocalo. Eventually he did become king, and kept to his oath. His half-brothers were all degraded to the level of commoners, but because of their undoubted royal ancestry they formed a special clan among the other royal clans. To compensate them for the loss of their rank they were given, and still hold, special functions at the installation and burial ceremonies of the king. They used also to hold the office of royal executioners and put to death all those who fell under the king's displeasure, but in these more enlightened times, that office is no longer required.

The third class is that of the Colo. Strictly speaking this

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565 563 term applies only to the descendants of the original companions of Nyikang, but in practice it embraces the whole of the common people and includes those who were probably in possession of the land before the coming of the Shilluk and who were conquered and absorbed into the tribe, and individuals of other tribes who, whatever their origin, have come into the country and settled there, eventually merging with the people.

565 644 [567] The last class is that of the Bang Reth, the servants of the king. This group is made up of the king's personal attendants, his wives and the wives of former kings, and the descendants of former royal slaves. It includes also those who have taken up special service with the king because of their reverence for his sacred office as Vicar of Nyikang, those who by reason of their utter destitution have been driven to accept the yoke of bondage to the king that they might share the bounty of the royal table, and those who have been enslaved on account of a crime committed by some member of their family who himself has escaped the king's justice.

[567] [681]

565 582 Marriage is permitted between the Kwareth and members of the other three clanes with certain exceptions. Thus, for example, a Kwareth may marry into the Bareth, but he may not wed the former wife of a king, or the widow of a king. The daughters of a king may not marry at all; since in theory all the cattle in the land belong to the king, no one can offer him a dowry, and so his daughters must go unmarried. In marriage the great rule of exogamy, that is marriage outside the clan, must be observed. Now the Kwareth form only one clan, as also do the Ororo, but the Colo and the Bang Reth are divided into several clans. A member of the Kwareth clan may not therefore marry another Kwareth, or a member of the Ororo another of the same clan, but members of the Colo and the Bareth may marry into other clans of the Colo and Bareth.

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342 Meanwhile a shallow pit is dug nearby, and to the broken soil sand and water are added, the mixture being puddled by vigorous treading till it has the consistency of a thick, sticky paste. When the rope weaving is finished, this mud paste is plastered on the wall within and without at the same time, until the whole is a solid mass about a foot thick. Another party of men is busy in the meantime preparing the framework of the roof; the older men make six thick rings of grass completely bound around with rope, graded from twelve feet to one foot in diameter; the younger men select six straight tree branches about seven feet long and as thick as a man's arm, and bind these to the largest of the grass rings with rope to form the base of a cone. The remaining rings are then tied inside the cone from base to apex which is then overlaid with millet stalks, securely fastened, and the framework is now complete and ready for lifting on to the top of the wall. These various stages of the operation are marked by the drinking of beer; the bowls are first filled when the mud is slapped on to the wall, a second time when the walls are finished off, and lastly when the roof is secured in its place. This marks the end of community labour, for the thatching can be done by one man assisted by a boy to throw the bundles of grass up to him.

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342 The thatcher begins at the base of the roof tying bundles of fine grass around the edge to form the eaves; the bundles overlap and hang about a foot over the edge of the framework. Sheaves of coarser grass are laid over these and fastened into position by rope laced through the millet stalks of the framework; at the apex the grass is gathered to a point, tightly bound with rope and neatly trimmed off. When the [462] thatching is done, the women clean up the floor inside the hut and smooth it over with mud so that it has a firm, cement-like surface, and the house is then ready for occupation. This is a typical Shilluk dwelling; the king's own house may be a little better built and more elaborately thatched, but it will not differ in size or construction from this. Tradition must be observed, and as long as the king is content to live in a round house with mud walls, no window and only

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a small hole for entrance, no Shilluk may dare to build himself, say, a square hut, or improve the light and ventilation of the traditional dwelling by putting in a window.

The Shilluk is a fine fisherman, adept in the use of harpoon, fishing spear and net. The harpoon he uses consists of a loose barbed head of iron which is fitted into the socket of a long bamboo pole to which it is attached by a length of thin but extremely strong twine. When a large fish is caught on the barb, it jerks the head from the socket, and is then played by the fisherman until he is able to finish it off with his fish spear. The spear itself is normally used in the shallows of the river or swamp; the man casts it repeatedly into the soft mud as he walks along, hoping to spear the mud fish which lie in great numbers under the surface.

The use of the net by an expert is a delightful thing to watch; the net is large, fine-meshed and circular in shape, weighted round the edge with pieces of lead. The fisherman gathers it in folds over one arm and casts it with a clean, effortless sweep; it falls lightly on the water in a perfect circle, sinks slowly to the bottom and then is slowly gathered in. If it is empty, it is folded and cast again with the same easy, graceful motion.

Fishing is done all the year round by individuals, but the real season is from March to May when the river and the large inland water-courses (the khors) are at their lowest level. During this time several villages will combine together to fish a certain khor, and as women as well as men join in, it becomes a real community effort. The day before that appointed for the fishing, men will go to the khor and block up its outlets, then on the day itself there is a general exodus from the villages, the men carrying harpoons and spears, and canoes if the river has to be crossed, the women carrying heavy nets, and cooking pots too if the start is early. Arrived at the khor, the women fix the nets on poles firmly pushed into the deep mud, side by side, right across one end, leaving no way of escape. The men line up abreast at the other end and move slowly towards the nets, thrusting into the mud

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643 797 awakened by a man calling out at my door; very sleepily I asked what was the matter and he replied, 'The king is sick and is calling for the Father to come to him.' The man who called me was a nephew of the king and had already given the king some instruction in the Faith as he was well able to do—he is a catechist in our Detwok mission. I first said Mass and after some breakfast set out for Fashoda, a distance of some twelve miles. I was accompanied by the catechist and the local medical dispenser who was also a Catholic. I had to walk, for the swamps were full and the grass was very high. There was not a breath of wind. Indeed it was a pleasure to wade through the swamps for the cool water was very refreshing to tired and hot feet. We pushed on fast and made only one stop of about five minutes, whilst my escort had a drink. I was offered milk, but as unboiled milk is very dangerous in this country, I refused. When we arrived at Fashoda the whole place had the silence of a sick room, no dogs barked and all the people spoke in whispers as is the custom in Fashoda. I was taken at once to the king's [195] [244] dwelling, which is just the same as any other Shilluk house, except that more care had been taken over its construction. In the house were four women fanning the [237] king with the wings of a saddle-billed stork and the eldest son of Papiti was there too. As soon as I entered the hut, the king sat up and greeted me; he was lying on the [5/5] floor just like any other Shilluk, but he had a thin mattress on top of the usual cow-hide. He seemed very pleased to see me and at once told the women to leave the hut and I began the instruction. My task was easy for he knew Catholic doctrine and believed it; he knew all the obligations of the Faith. When I put the question to him about his wives he said, 'Father, my soul is the main thing now,' and before witnesses he gave me his promise to be a man of one wife. I baptized him 'Joseph' after our Patron, and it was also the feast day of St. Joseph of Cupertino. He received baptism with great devotion and gave me the impression of understanding to the full the meaning of the

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dowry. The models are hung up in front of the hut and the ceremony is concluded with beer-drinking.

About a month later the child may be taken home to be shown to its father. The mother carrying the infant is accompanied by three or four girl friends and the old woman who attended her at the confinement. The father and his male relatives and friends inspect the baby outside the hut to satisfy themselves that it shows no deformity or any other abnormality. If such unhappily were the case, the child would be enclosed together with a live sheep in a basket and thrown into the Nile. When the father is satisfied that the child is normal, a goat or sheep is killed, the meat eaten at the evening feast and the skin scraped and softened to serve as a sleeping mat for the baby. Beer is prepared and the whole village invited to come to the party. Those who come, however, are expected to bring some small gifts of money, beads, bracelets and the like. These are the perquisites of the midwife, the beer makers and the girls who escorted the mother and child back to her home.

There are no special ceremonies for the birth of children after the first born, and the mother may or may not return to her father's village for her confinements as she pleases. There is however a little feast to celebrate the birth and, as before, a sheep or goat is killed and the skin used as the infant's sleeping mat.

During a woman's pregnancy neither she nor her husband is permitted to visit anyone who is sick. They are considered to be unlucky and their visit to a sick person would surely result in his death. The most that is allowed is that they may stand at the fence surrounding the house where the sick person is and enquire after him.

With reference to the custom of the young wife leaving her husband's house for her father's for the birth of her first child, it must be mentioned that the wives of the king, not merely on the occasion of their first born, but for all subsequent confinements, must leave Fashoda. They do not go to their former home, however, but to the village of some chief at a considerable distance from the capital. The child that is

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born there is brought up in that village under the tutelage of the chief. If the child is a boy he is brought up in much the same manner as other boys of the village but it is not forgotten that he is a Nyireth, and consequently a potential king. He is given a herd of cattle, and on reaching manhood is expected to found his own village, also at a distance from Fashoda, for the fear of assassination is always present to the reth, and hence it is ever the royal policy to keep all the princes as far distant from Fashoda as possible.

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Marriage is an important affair, not only for those directly concerned, but for the whole community, for among the Shilluk it has many economic implications arising chiefly from the condition of the dowry or bride-price, almost universal throughout Africa. When the Shilluk youth, decorated in his best, goes a-wooing, if the lady of his choice accepts the heart and fortune which he casts at her feet and coyly says yes, she is sure to say that he must 'see father first'. I presume that an English youth in similar happy circumstances would address his prospective father-in-law thus: 'Sir, I wish to marry your daughter. She has done me the honour of promising to be my wife,' and with a brief discussion of present security and future prospects, the matter would be quickly settled. Not so does the Shilluk bridegroom-to-be approach his future in-laws; he does not appear in person, but sends one or two friends to negotiate the marriage for him. Nor must the ambassador come empty-handed, but must bring the traditional gifts as befitting the occasion; spears, hoes, tobacco and firewood for the father and mother of the girl and, as the negotiations proceed, upwards of seven sheep which become the property of her brother or cousins, and finally, and most important of all, the cattle.

The bride-price of ten or more head of cattle is an essential condition for every Shilluk marriage. It may be paid in instalments and indeed generally is, and its payment usually extends over several years, but there can can be no question of the young couple living together as husband and wife